CHRISTMAS DECORATION OF CHURCHES

SECOND EDITION.

S. Warner.

Christmas 1865.

CHRISTMAS DECORATION

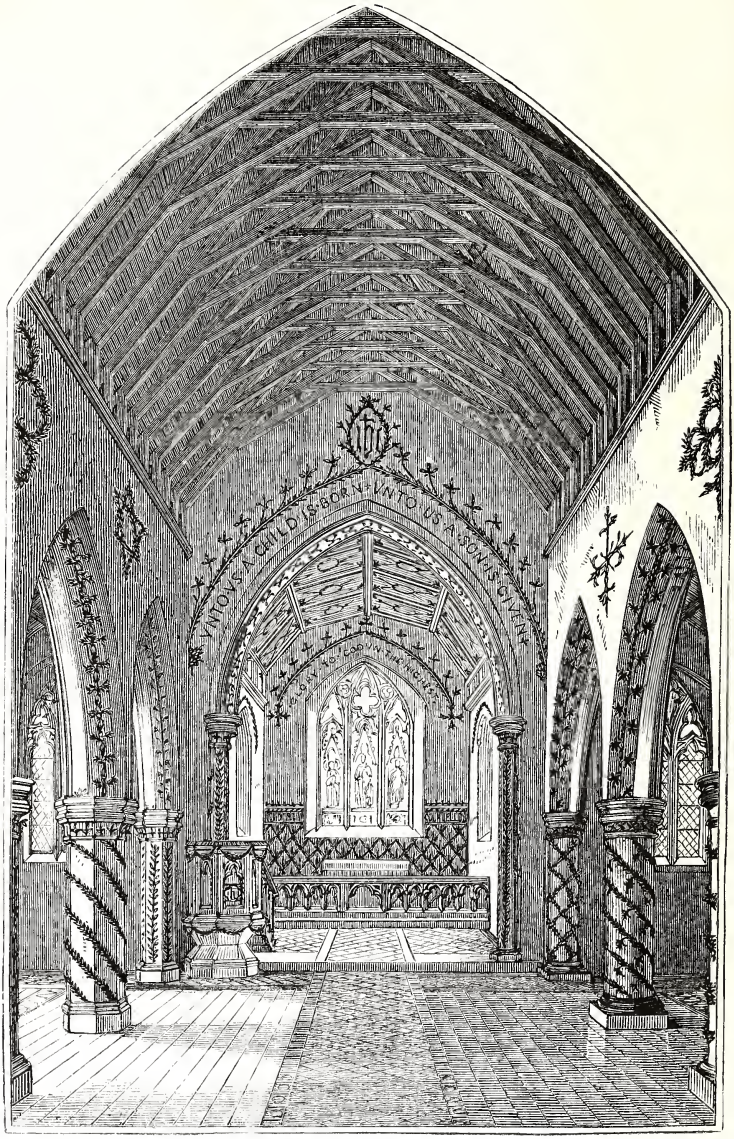
OF

CHURCHES.



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FRONTISPIECE

AN ESSAY

ON THE

CHRISTMAS

Decoration of Churches:

WITH AN

APPENDIX

ON THE

Decorations for Easter,

THE SCHOOL FEAST, HARVEST THANKSGIVING, CONFIRMATION, AND FOR A MARRIAGE, AND A BAPTISM.

BY

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ON THE

Christmas Decoration of Churches.

I.

Introduction.

IN OLD TIMES men took more pains to do honour to the great events of life than we do now. They would strew the street-way with rushes and flowers, and hang tapestries from every window, when any processson of king, or lord, or civic pageant was to pass through their streets. For a wedding or other domestic festival they would adorn the hall with hangings and flags, and scatter flowers among the rushes on the floor and in the broad window seats, and hang garlands on the walls and from the timbers of the roof for bravery and pleasant smell. And just so, on occasions of special ecclesiastical state or festival, they would adorn the Church with tapestries and banners and green boughs and flowers, to give the Church a handsome and festive appearance. The custom had no recondite symbolical meaning; as Bingham* says—"It was not done at any certain times for any pretended mystery, but only to make them [the Churches] more decent," and fit for men to meet in for their public worship.

How old the custom is we cannot say, probably as old as Christianity, because the same loving reverence which paid all, and more than all, the customary honours to the Lord, which anointed His Head with the precious ointment, and wrapped His Body in fine linen, and brought one hundred pounds weight of spices for His embalmment—that same spirit would not deprive

* Christian Antiq. iii. 261.

the upper rooms where Christians assembled for worship, of the adornments which were customary in rooms of houses and places of public assembly, on occasions of domestic or public ceremonial.

The earliest notices which we find of the custom are those which Bingham quotes. St. Augustine alludes to one who removed some of the flowers with which the altar of a Church was decorated. Paulinus sings—"Bring praises to the Lord, ye young men; perform your pious vows; strew the pavement with flowers, wreath the threshold with garlands." And St. Jerome, in his funeral oration upon his friend Nepotian, praises him for his care to have everything becoming and orderly about the Church and its services, and, among other things, that he shaded the Basilicas of the Church, and the Chapels of the martyrs with different kinds of flowers, and branches of trees, and shoots of vine. "These were but small things in themselves," St. Jerome says, "but a pious mind devoted to Christ is intent upon things great and small, and neglects nothing that may deserve the name of the very meanest office in the Church." And it is plain St. Jerome had a greater value for such sort of natural beauty and comeliness in Churches, than for rich ornaments of costly pictures and paintings, and silver and gold and precious stones.

It would naturally be at the great ecclesiastical festivals especially, that the Churches would be thus festally adorned. George Herbert, in the very spirit of Jerome's eulogy of Nepotian, says of his Country Parson: "He takes order that the Church be swept and kept clean, without dust or cobwebs, and at great festivals strawed and stuck with boughs, and perfumed with incense." And, on the other hand, on Fast days the Churches seem to have been significantly strewed with bitter herbs. In the Churchwardens' accounts of St. Margaret, Westminster,* under the year 1650, is the following item: "Paid for herbs that were strewed in the windows of the Church and about the same, att two severall daies of humiliation, 3*s.* 10*d.*" And again, under the year 1651, we find: "Paid for hearbs that were strewed in the Church on the 24th day of May, being a day of humiliation, 3*s.*"

There are scattered allusions to these floral decorations, and traditional remnants of them, which help us to see when they were done, and to what extent they were carried, and give us, besides, some curious glimpses into ancient manners and customs. Many of our readers, probably, will be glad to have these scattered notes brought together here, by way of introduction to the

* Nichols's "Illustrations of the Manners and Expenses of Ancient Times in England."

more practical part of the subject which we have proposed to ourselves.

The great PARISH FEAST day, which was usually on the Saint's day to whom the Parish Church was dedicated, and was in fact the Dedication Feast, was one of the great occasions on which the Church was thus festally adorned. The English Church kept these Dedication Feasts with greater festivity than the other branches of the Church, for which there is an especial reason. It was customary indeed in many Churches to observe the day of the Consecration among their anniversary festivals, but to this Gregory the Great added a new custom here in England, which was that "on the annual Feast of the Dedication the people might build themselves huts of the boughs of trees round about the Church, and there feast and entertain themselves with eating and drinking in lieu of their ancient heathen festivals."* "From this custom," says Bingham, "it is more than probable came our Wakes, which are still observed in some places as the remains of those Feasts of Dedication of particular Churches."

On ST. DUNSTAN'S DAY, 1494, the Churchwardens of St. Dunstan's-in-the-East, London,† paid "for v. dozen of garlands vi*d.*," besides other sums for white and claret wine, and ale and beer and bread.

In the parish accounts of St. Mary-at-Hill, London, in 1557, we read, "For garlands for our LADY'S DAY,† and for strawenge yerbes, ij*s.* ij*d.*;" and probably among the garlands or the yerbes would be the pretty pinky-white Cardamine, with which the meadows are covered at that season; and which from that circumstance took the name, by which the country people still call it, of (Our) Lady's Smock.

Thomas Naogeorgus, translated by Barnabe Googe, in 1570, thus describes it:

> The Dedication of the Church is yerely had in minde,
> With worship passing Catholicke, and in a wondrous kinde:
> From out the steeple hie is hangde a crosse and banner fayre,
> The pavement of the temple strowde with hearbes of pleasant ayre;
> The pulpits and the aulters all that in the Church are seene,
> And every pewe and piller great are deckt with boughs of greene.

The rush-bearings, which still continue to be held in Westmoreland, and were until quite recently general in Cheshire, seem to be a remnant of the custom of the Dedication Feast. It would seem that on that day the villagers used to take of

* Bede, bk. i, c. 30; Brougham, bk. viii. c. 9.
† It was their Dedication Feast.

their rush harvest a portion for the use of the Church. In Cheshire, the rush-bearing "took place on the day of the wake, and was attended with a procession of young men and women, dressed in ribands, and carrying garlands, &c., which were hung up in the Church. We saw these garlands remaining in several Churches."* Hone has put on record an accurate description of the rush-bearing, as he saw it at Grasmere: "During the whole of this day (July 21) I observed the children busily employed in preparing garlands of such wild flowers as the beautiful valley produces, for the evening procession, which commenced at nine, in the following order: the children (chiefly girls), holding these garlands, paraded through the village, preceded by the Union Band; they then entered the Church, where the three largest garlands were placed on the altar, and the remaining ones in various other parts of the place. . . . Wordsworth is the chief supporter of these rustic ceremonies."†

But it was not in the country only, for the parish accounts of St. Margaret, Westminster, give, under the year 1544, the item, "Paid for rushes against the Dedication Day, which is the first Sunday of October, 1*s.* 5*d.*"

The custom of strewing rushes, or some substitute for rushes, on the Church floor was not peculiar to the Dedication Feast; it was customary on all high days. It is to be remembered that in those days the floors of houses were not covered with carpets, but a strewing of rushes or hay or straw served instead. This continued to be the case so late as the time of James I. It is related as an illustration of Cardinal Wolsey's magnificence that he had the strewings of his great hall at Hampton Court renewed every day. We find an allusion to it in the First Part of Shakespeare's HENRY IV., Act iii. s. 1.

> She bids you (says Glendower to Mortimer)
> Upon the wanton rushes lay you down,
> And rest your gentle head upon her lap,
> And she will sing the song that pleaseth you.

On great occasions sweet herbs and flowers were strewed among the rushes. In Ben Johnson's POETASTER, Albius, the court jeweller, is going to receive a visit from some courtiers, and he and his wife Chloe are making preparations; Chloe bids:

> Come bring those perfumes forward a little, and strew some roses and violets here.

Probably the Church floor was kept always strewed, just as we see that the floors of halls and parlours were, and the strew-

* Faber's Sermon "On the Dignity of Little Children."

† Hone's "Table Book," vol. ii. p. 277.

ings were renewed on every feast day. We find in Ducange these references to the subject—

"On the greater feasts rushes are to be scattered everywhere in Church."—*From the MS. Consuetudinal of St. Augustine's at Limousin,* f. 14.*

"On the feast of St. Augustine the Prior ought to receive rushes, which are required, according to custom, to adorn the Church and chapter house." —*A MS. of Mont S. Michael, date about* 1401, A.D. †

"It is also the business of the Almoner to find rushes on the great festivals for the choir and cloister."‡

In the York Visitation Returns, published by the Surtees Society,§ we find some further notices of the custom in our English parish Churches.

From Akume, Yorkshire, it is stated that the rector, who ought to find straw for the Church twice a year, has omitted it for two years past.‖

From Salton, in 1472, A.D., it is returned that the parishioners say that the Prebendary is bound to strew the Church with straw twice a year, viz., Christmas and Easter, but has not done it for two years past.¶

Also from Wystow, in the same year, is a similar complaint. They say that the Church ought to be strewed with straw at the expense of the Prebendary, as has been done time out of mind, but now he refuses to do it.**

So, in 1510, there is a complaint from St. Michael le Belfry, in the city of York—"Item, thar wher of old custome it hath beyne used that evere yere at the festes of Whitsonday and Saint Peter Day the Kirke was wonnt to be strewed wt ryshes by the Chaumberlane of the mynster, and now it is not soe."

The parish of Middleton-Cheney Northants, has to this day a

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* Juncus majoribus festis sparsus in ecclesia alibi: (*Consuetud. MSS. S. Augustini Lemovic*, f. 14.

† In festo S. Augustini præpositus debet recipere juncum, qui debetur ex consuetudine ad parandum chorum et capitulum: (*Codex MS. Montis S. Michaelis an. circ.* 1400.)

‡ Eleemosynarius tenetur etiam invenire juncum in magnis festivitatibus in choro et in claustro.

§ York Fabric Rolls, Surtees Society's Publications, vol. 35.

‖ Resta que debet invenire stramina ecclesiæ ter in anno, ea subtraxit per brennium: (*York Fabric Rolls*, p. 243.)

¶ Dicunt parostriani quod prebendarius tenetur sternere ecclesiam cum stramine bis annuatim viz. in festis natalis Domini et Paschæ; quod non factum erat per duos annos: (*Ibid.* p. 255.)

** Dicunt quod en sumptibus prebendarii ecclesia epel strata cum stramine, perut per tempus cujus contraii memoria hominum riot existit, nunc recusat: (*Ibid.* p. 256.)

benefaction to provide hay for strewing the Church in summer, the Rector finding straw in winter.

Newton, in his HERBAL TO THE BIBLE, A.D. 1587, speaks of "Sedge and rushes, with which many in the country do use in summer time to strawe their parlours and Churches, as well for coolness as for pleasant smell." And again in King Charles the First's Proclamation, in 1633, relative to "lawful recreations on Sundays, &c.," it is ordered—"That women shall have leave to carry rushes to the Church for the decorating of it according to their old custom." The plant meant in these old books by the juncus is not the common rush, but what the old botanists call the *Juncus aromaticus*, because it emits a faint sweet odour when bruised. The plant is really a flag, and is now called *Acoru calamus*. Sir W. Hooker, in his BRITISH FLORA, says: "The agreeable scent of this plant has recommended it for garlands, and for strewing on the floor of the Cathedral at Norwich on festal days." Very likely, however, the common rush was often used when the aromatic one was not easily attainable.

But besides giving the Church a fresh "strewing"—that was the technical word—on Feast days, it was also decorated with boughs and flowers; and just as people first eat boar's head at Christmas, and goose at Michaelmas, and lamb at Easter, because these viands happened to be the dishes in prime season at those holiday tides, and so in process of time the viands came to be associated with the feast; so probably, people first used certain flowers at certain festivals because they happened to be in bloom then, and thus in time the flowers came to be associated, as we find them to be, with the festivals.

PALM SUNDAY was a great day for floral decorations; on that day the whole congregation, carrying palm branches and singing a Litany, made a procession round the churchyard to the churchyard cross, and so into the Church and up to the altar, upon which they laid their palms to be blessed,* and the palms were then distributed to them again by the attendant deacons. Various substitutes for the Eastern palm were used; the most popular of all was the Sallow, not because the sallow was like a palm, for it was most unlike, but because its lithe green boughs, full of yellow catkins, were at that season of the year the things most full of life and blossom: the country people in many parts still know the blooming sallow boughs by no other name than that of palm. Newton, in his HERBAL TO THE BIBLE before quoted, says:—"The common people in some countries

* There are several notices of churchyard crosses erected for the procession to be made to on Palm Sunday. An office for blessing the palms on Palm Sunday may be found in the old service books.

used to decke their Church with the boughes and branches of box on the Sunday next before Easter, commonly called Palm Sunday." It has been suggested that branches of the churchyard yew tree were frequently used as palms. The extracts from churchwardens' accounts complete the list of Palm Sunday flowers: at St. Martin Outwich, London, there was paid in "1510-11, for palme, box, floures, and cakes, iiij*d.*; 1525, paid for palme on Palme Sunday, ij*d.*; *Ibid.* paid for kaks (cakes), flowers, and yow (yew), ij*d.*" And the accounts of Allhallows Staining give us similar entries: "For paulme-flowers, cakes, trashes (nails),* and thred on Palm Sondaye, viij*d.*; *item*, for box and palme on Palm Sondaye; *item*, for gennepore† for the Church, ij*d.*" Nichols remarks upon these extracts, that "it is yet the custom at King's Cliff, in Northamptonshire, to stick the Church with palms on Passion Sunday."

The decoration of the Church for the great festival of EASTER continued general long after such honour had ceased to be paid to the ordinary Saint days, except in individual cases. A writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, July, 1783, speaks of "the flowers with which many Churches are ornamented on Easter Day." And in many parts of the country the custom has not become obsolete to this day. It is curious, perhaps, that we do not find more early notices of the custom. The churchwardens of St. Dunstan-in-the-East, London, paid at Easter, 1494, "for disciplining rods‡ and trash (nails) for the sepulchre 1*s.* 1*d.*" The accounts of St. Martin Outwich, London, tell us of "j*d.* paid for *brome* ageynst Ester," in 1525; but no doubt all the beautiful flowers of the season were used on such a day. The sculpture at the back of the interesting Easter Sepulchre at Hawton Church, Notts (there is a cast of it at the Sydenham Crystal Palace), represents a rose-bush, in full bloom, as growing out of the tomb from which the Lord has risen. The idea was probably taken from the old mediæval legend, which says that, after the Virgin's assumption, the Apostles found her tomb full of white and red roses. The Hawton sculpture suggests to us the likelihood that when the effigy of the Lord—which had been taken down from the rood on Good Friday evening and laid in the Easter Sepulchre—was removed again on Easter Day, the empty tomb was filled with roses.

The 1st of May, again, was a great day for such customs,

* Which were used for fastening tapestry.
† Juniper, which was burnt as a perfume.
‡ Rods or sticks used for adjusting the tapestry of the Easter Sepulchre.

rather, perhaps, because it was May Day than because it was the festival of SS. PHILIP AND JAMES, but the feast partook of a religious character. They not only turned the streets into leafy avenues and the porches of their houses into green arbours, and set up a maypole decked with ribands and garlands, and an arbour beside for Maid Marian to sit in and see the dancers; but the floral decoration extended also into the Church. Polydore Vergil * says: "At the calends of Maie, not only houses and gates were garnished with boughs and flowers, but in some places the Churches." Aubrey, in his "Remains of Gentilisme and Judaisme" (MS. Lands. 266, f. 5), says: "On May Day the young maids of every parish carry about garlands of flowers, which afterwards they hang up in their Churches." And Spenser, in his "Shepherd's Calendar," says:

> Young folks now flocken in every where,
> To gather May buskets† and smelling brere;
> And home they hasten the postes to dight,
> And all the Kirke pillours ere day light,
> With hawthorn buds and sweete eglantine,
> And girlonds of roses, and soppes in wine.‡

We need not say that the beautiful milk-white hawthorn was especially the flower of the season. At Charlton-on-Otmoor, Oxon, it is an immemorial custom, still observed, to place a garland every May Day upon a wooden cross, which remains upon the fine rood-loft of the Church; it is engraved in the volume of plates to Mr. Parker's "Glossary of Architecture."

Concerning WHIT SUNDAY, which is still a great feast in rural districts, we find that, at Yatton, in Somersetshire,§ John Lane left half an acre of ground to the poor, reserving a quantity of the grass for strewing the Church on Whit Sunday. The Church of Heybridge, in Essex, is still strewed with rushes and maple boughs on Whit Sunday in pursuance of an old bequest. One of the City Churches, we are told, has a sum of money left to it for the purpose of buying roses for Whit Sunday; and in the accounts of St. Mary-at-Hill, London, we find an entry for "garlands, Whit Sunday, iij*d.*"—rose garlands perhaps, if we may conclude so from Chaucer's allusion in the ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE, where Love bids his pupil

> Have hatte of floures fresh as May,
> Chapelett of roses of Whit Sunday,
> For sich array ne costeth but lite.

---

* Langley's Poly. Verg., f. 102.
† Boughs.
‡ "Sops in wine"—clove pinks (*Dianthus caryophyllus*).
§ Collinson's Hist. Somerset, vol. iii. 620.

At St. James's Church, Mitre Square, Aldgate, there is a very pretty custom on Whit Tuesday, for a knowledge of which we are indebted to the following paragraph, taken from the *Standard* of May 26, 1860, which is our authority for saying that it is a custom which is still in full observance :—

"The Flower Sermon.—Our young readers will thank us for mentioning the Whit Tuesday sermon to the young at St. James's Church, Mitre Square, Aldgate. The young persons attending this service take each of them a bouquet of flowers, and the sermon is always about flowers. The scene is thereby rendered peculiarly harmonious. The service will commence at seven o'clock, and the Rector will preach.—*City Press.*"

Trinity Sunday, again, as one of the great feasts, would call forth special decoration; but we find only one allusion to it, in the Churchwardens' accounts of Lambeth,* where we find, in 1519, an entry: "For garlands and drynke for the chylderne on Trenyté Eve, 6*d.*;" and another: "For 4 onssys of garnesyng rebonds, 3*s.*"

In the notes of the provision made by the Churchwardens of St. Mary-at-Hill, London, for the observance of St. Barnabas' Day, we find allusions which carry us a little further in our apprehension of the extent to which these floral decorations were adopted. In the years 17 and 19 Edward IV. we find the entry, "For rose garlondis and woodrove garlondis on St. Barnebe's Daye, xj*d.*;" and in the year 1486, "For two dos. di. bocse garlands (two dozen and a half of box garlands) for prestes and clerkes on Saynt Barnabe Daye, j*s.* x*d.*;" and in 1512, "Rose garlands and lavender, St. Barnabas, j*s.* vj*d.*" It would seem a little incongruous to us, perhaps, to see a grave and reverend clergyman saying prayers with a garland on his head, whether of roses, or of woodruff, or of more sober box; but we must not judge of these things by our own more prosaic customs. Not only gay Greeks, but stern Romans, used to wear garlands of flowers every day at their feasts; and in the Middle Ages not only the gay young gentleman in the Romaunt of the Rose had "a hatte of floures fresh as May," but grave seniors wore chaplets at feasts, and knights wore them round their helmets. We confine ourselves to the instances of Ecclesiastics. Chaucer says of the Sompnour (an officer of the Archdeacon's court),

> A garland had he set upon his heed
> As gret as it were for an ale-stake.†

* Lyson's "Environs of London," I. 310.

† A stake set up before an ale-house, with a bush at the top of it for a sign. It may still be seen on the Continent. Hence the proverb: "Good wine needs no bush."

The fact that priests and clerks really wore garlands during divine service on high days does not depend on this solitary notice. Dr. Rock, in The Church of our Fathers, quotes Polydore Vergil to prove that in England priests performed service on certain high days crowned, and especially at St. Paul's, London, on the feast of St. Paul. And Stowe mentions the same fact; he describes the Dean and Chapter, on St. Paul's Day, "apparelled in coaps and vestments, with garlands of roses on their heads, issuing out of the west door."

Corpus Christi Day, again, was a great feast of the unreformed Church; and when the streets along which the procession was to pass were hung, as they were, with tapestries and strewed with flowers, we may be quite sure that the Church itself, which was the goal of their pilgrimage, exhibited a climax in its decorations. The accounts of St. Mary-at-Hill record, in 17 and 19 Edward IV., "garlands on Corpus Christi Day, x*d.*;" and the accounts of St. Martin Outwich also mention rose garlands on Corpus Christi Day, under the years 1524 and 1525. In Pennant's time a tradition of the Corpus Christi ceremonies still lingered at Llanasaph, North Wales, in the custom of strewing green herbs and flowers at the doors of houses on that day.

Midsummer Day was one of the great days of domestic feasting and traditional superstitions; and that circumstance has brought us more abundant notices (as it then probably brought a more general outward observance) of the Church customs on St. John's Eve. Birch seems to have been the special tree, as the yellow Hypericum (St. John's wort) was the special flower of St. John. Stowe tells us that on the Vigil of St. John Baptist "every man's door, being shadowed with green birch, long fennel, St. John's wort, orpine, white lilies, and such like, garnished upon with garlands of beautiful flowers, had also lamps of glass, with oil burning in them all the night." And the Churchwardens' accounts of St. Mary-at-Hill also mention, under 17 and 19 Edward IV., "for birch at Midsummer, viij*d.*;" and 1486, "birch Midsummer Eve, iiij*d.*;" and "for birch bowes (boughs) against Midsummer." Also the accounts of St. Martin Outwich, in 1524, record, "Payde for byrch and bromes (broom) at Midsom^{r}, ij*d.*;" and in 1525, "Payde for byrch and bromes at Midsom^{r}, iij*d.*" Pennant says they stuck St. John's wort over the doors in Wales in his day. In the court of Magdalen, Oxford, a sermon used to be preached on this day from the stone pulpit in the corner, and "the quadrangle was furnished round with a large fence of green boughs, that the preaching might more nearly resemble

that of John Baptist in the wilderness; and a pleasant sight it was."*

But while the old customs which used to be observed on other holy days have become obselete, or linger only here and there as quaint relics of olden times, we still keep up in full use a crowd of old customs at CHRISTMAS—yule log, and wassail bowl, and boar's head, and mummers; and dearer and better customs still, of family meetings, and reconcilement of quarrels, and charities to the poor; and, among the other customs of the season, we decorate our houses and our Churches with evergreens to make them gay and handsome for the joyful feast. The custom is still so universally observed that any illustrations of it would be superfluous.

ST. ROCH'S DAY (August 16) was formerly celebrated as a general Harvest Home in England. †

Herrick, in the time of Charles I., thus combines a number of these customs:

Down with rosemary and bays,
  Down with the missletoe,
Instead of holly now upraise
  The greener box for show.

The holly hitherto did sway;
  Let box now domineer,
Until the dancing Easter Day
  Or Easter's Eve appear.

Then youthful box, which now hath grace
  Your houses to renew,
Grown old, surrender must his place
  Unto the crisped yew.

When yew is out, then birch comes in,
  And many flowers beside,
Both of a fresh and fragrant kin,
  To honour Whitsuntide.

Green rushes then, and sweetest bents,
  With cooler oaken boughs,
Come in for comely ornaments
  To re-adorn the house.

Thus times do shift; each thing his turn does hold,
New things succeed as former things grow old.

* Life of Bishop Horne. Works by Jones, XII. 131.
† Timbs's "Things Not Generally Known," 1st Series, p. 156.

The custom of adorning our Churches with flowers for great ecclesiastical festivals is so charming, and in itself so innocent, that very likely, with the present taste for reviving such old customs, we shall soon have the floral decoration of our Churches generally revived on other occasions besides Christmas; at the great festival of Easter, for instance, and at the School Feast, which is so rapidly becoming what our old village feasts used to be; and at the Confirmation; and at other similar occasions of general or local religious festivity. Every year now, for example, we see notices in the newspapers of Harvest Homes, in which the first part of the proceedings is to go to God's House, and give thanks to Him, the Giver of the harvest; and the Churches are described as having been appropriately decorated for the occasion with branches and flowers and corn. At present, however, Christmas is the only time at which the custom is universally observed; and the practical suggestions which we have at present to make on the subject of the Decoration of Churches will be restricted to that one season.

II.

Styles of Decoration.

THERE are two styles of floral decoration, which we may call the Naturalistic and the Architectural. The principles of the Naturalistic style are sufficiently simple; its professors are the Sextons and Pew-openers of England; they have reduced its practice to very simple elements. First of all, they stick sprigs of holly into the corners of all the pews, and the result is that when the occupants of the corners lean back to listen to the First Lesson they find their heads stabbed by the strong sharp thorns, and half the decorations are at once plucked out and tossed into the alleys; their second device is to fasten straggling branches of holly to the candle-brackets of the pulpit and desk; and their *chef d'œuvre* is to tie a bundle of evergreen round the middle of each pillar, just as a labourer ties a bundle of thorns round a young tree to prevent the cattle from injuring its bark. The highest ideal at which this school can aim is probably that which is pleasantly pictured by a correspondent of the *Spectator*, who says that, in going into his Church on Christmas morning, he found "the central alley converted into a shady avenue and each pew into a separate bower."

The Architectural school makes the floral decoration relative to the architectural features of the building. No artist, no person of artistic feeling, can, we imagine, hesitate a moment as to which is the true style of decoration. Whenever it is attempted to take the decoration out of the Sexton's hands and to make it a little more tasteful, the adaptation of the decoration to the principal architectural features of the building is almost inevitable. What we advocate in this essay is a deliberate adoption and a careful working out of this principle. The way in which the Gothic architects themselves applied to the permanent decoration of their buildings, foliage and flowers, carved in stone and often painted to imitate the natural flowers and leaves from which they are copied, is an evidence of the practice which they would adopt when required to decorate the Church further with living leaves and flowers for a festival; and a careful study of the way in which they applied their stone floral decoration will

supply us with the principles on which we must apply our more transient decorations.

Their commonest application of floral ornament was to the capitals of their pillars. They frequently applied it to the hollow mouldings of string-courses and arches; either filling the hollow with a continuous trail of leaves and flowers, or more commonly putting single flowers (ball-flowers) or bunches of leaves (Tudor ornaments) at intervals in the hollow. They very commonly enriched their hood-mouldings and gables and canopies with foliage crockets and finials. The famous pillar at Rosslyn Chapel shows us the rich and festal effect produced by putting a spiral wreath of foliage round the pier. In rich work we frequently find the wall spaces relieved with diaper-patterns, and with panels of geometrical shapes bearing devices and monograms, which are very capable of imitation in foliage work; and the texts, which we find carved on scrolls, and under cornices and string-courses, will suggest other methods in which our festal decorations may be appropriately and effectively applied. We will treat of our natural decorations in the order in which their sculptured derivatives have thus occurred to us.

III.

Materials.

WHEN we come to ask what materials are to be used, we find ourselves compelled to deal, at the outset, with the question—Shall we use *Flowers* in our decorations? There are a great number of excellent persons who like to see the Church decorated with the customary Christmas greenery, but have a horror of the introduction of flowers; it is a novelty, and they suspect all novelties. Have a tender respect, dear Decorators, for this suspicion of novelties. In the concrete it often becomes a mere blind unreasoning and unreasonable prejudice; but in the abstract it is a respectable conservatism, which will not abandon old customs merely because it cannot on demand produce a good reason for them, and will not hastily assent to novelties because

they look plausible at first sight. We suppose, as an abstract question, no good reason can be given why, if you may laudably decorate a Church with leaves and berries, you may not innocently use flowers also. But you must not expect people to give good reasons for their likes and dislikes, their prejudices and suspicions. If reasons were as plenty as blackberries, they will not give them on compulsion. The fact remains that, reason or no reason, there are a considerable number of excellent and worthy persons who have no abstract objection to see a few flowers introduced among the decorations; they even think there would be something poetical and beautiful in putting a great bouquet upon the Communion Table—if there were no superstitious intention in it; but, in these days of change, they are afraid of every novelty; they fear lest too much regard be had to these things, in themselves innocent; they fear the gradual and insidious return of superstitious practices; they fear a serpent lying hid among your flowers. Take care, dear Decorators, that you do not give good reason for such fears. But, though we respect these fears, we do not share them. There may be, doubtless there are, men whose tendencies, if unchecked, would carry them astray from the purity and simplicity of the doctrine and practice of the Church of England. When the mind of a whole people is deeply stirred we must expect individual eccentricities. But though these men and their doings occupy a large share of the public attention, we believe that they are really very few in number. We believe that the great religious movement in the midst of which we have the happiness to live is a sound and healthy one; we honestly believe that the cautious and conservative members of the Church have not really any cause to fear, when they see the young people who are growing up about them taught to hold Church of England doctrines a little more definitely than their fathers and mothers were taught to do in the careless days which are passed; or caring more about the comeliness of the fabric and furniture of God's House; or taking pleasure in decorating it a little more tastefully than old John Sexton and the rusty-black pew-openers used to do—not even if their taste should lead them to heighten the effect of the sober green with a few harmless flowers as well as coral holly berries, not even if they should put a bouquet of camellias on the Communion Table in honour of Christ's birthday feast.

And we beg to say here, too, and so to have done with the subject, that it will be our duty to describe decorations of various degrees of simplicity and of elaborateness; but that we guard ourselves against its being supposed that we advocate that everything which we suggest should be introduced into every Church. We are confident that everything which we are about to describe

is lawful and innocent; and there is here no question of high Church or low Church; we all, high and low, have our Churches decorated for Christmas. The question is not one of theology, but of taste; shall we decorate in good taste or in bad taste? We assume that every Clergyman will remember that all things are lawful, but all things are not expedient, and will combine æsthetic zeal with practical discretion. For ourselves, we confess that though we should like very much to please ourselves and the more artist-minded of our people by a judicious introduction of better taste in the Christmas decorations of our Church, yet we would rather let John Sexton scratch the heads of the congregation, and put his ridiculous bundles of thorns round the fair pillars of the Church, for a few years longer, than excite vague and unfounded suspicions, and mar the infinitely higher joy and union of the Christmas feast, by making the Church decorations a cause of strife and division.

But though we may use flowers here and there to heighten the effect of our decorations generally, or to give especial honour to some particular parts of the Church, it is on the evergreens that we depend for the groundwork of all our decoration.

In cutting the evergreens, remember that it is not necessary to cut off great branches: you need only small twigs, and if branches are sent you will have to strip the twigs from them. Let your friends know this, and they will be the less reluctant to thin out their shrubberies to supply you with material. Every kind of evergreen is useful for your purpose, and every kind may be used, with one exception, so remarkable that it is worth special note. You may use every other kind of evergreen, but in decorating a Church you must not use missletoe. We all use missletoe in the decoration of our houses; we should not think our Christmas complete if there did not hang in hall or dining-room a bunch of its curious forked branches, with their terminal pairs of nerveless pale-green leaves, and a white crystalline berry dropped within each pair; but not a sprig of it must be put into the Church; every sexton in the kingdom will tell you so; he does not know why, but it never is, and never ought to be. The universal use of it in our houses and the universal absence of it in our Churches are both curious examples of the vitality of traditional customs. We all put it into our houses—not as an excuse for saluting our fair cousins, holly berries would be excuse enough for that—if one needed any excuse at all—but we do it simply because our fathers always did it, and they because their fathers did it; and so the custom has descended from generation to generation, ever since the time when our forefathers were disciples of the Druids and used the mystic symbol in their mid-winter festivities. But the Christian missionaries, while adopting all that was innocent

in the popular observances, banished the superstitious symbol of a false creed from the Christmas decorations of God's House; and that tradition of its ecclesiastical disuse has descended from sacristan to sacristan side by side with the tradition of its social use.

Holly should, perhaps, be the staple of your decorations. It is specially appropriate, by custom and association, to Christmas, as the blooming sallow is to Palm Sunday, or milk-white hawthorn to May-day. Moreover, it is the most pictorially effective of all the evergreens :—Look at the dark glossy green of its leaves; see how they are bent into a variety of planes so as to produce a wonderful play of light and shade from their surface; how the cusped outline and the unyielding texture of the leaves assimilate with the architectural forms to which they are to be applied; how piquant the thorny points, and how the green sprig is illuminated by its bunch of coral-red berries. By-the-bye, notice that the twigs which are most fruitful in berries have usually the smoothest, tamest, least picturesque leaves. Get an ample supply of both, cut off the tame leaves from the berry-bearing twigs, leaving only the mass of berries on the stalk, and work in these bunches of berries among the leafy twigs. Get as much variegated holly as possible, every single leaf of it will be found valuable in giving lightness and relief to the darker green, which is the pervading tint of evergreens. Laurel is not so valuable, its leaves are large, flat, and tame, and its sprigs do not form into nice sprays. Portugal laurel is valuable for its colour; take in preference the twigs which bear the smaller leaves. Laurestinus is valuable both for its sprays and for the relief which its flowers afford, but it soon fades. Select your ivy with care. The ordinary large leaves are not very useful; the terminal sprays of smaller leaves with bunches of black berries are useful; and the small variety which grows on trees and old walls and hedge-banks, and has small deeply-cut leaves of glossy green with a beautiful net-work of light-coloured veins, is specially valuable. The smaller-leaved evergreens, such as yew, myrtle, and box, are specially useful for the smaller devices which require finer work. Little bunches of the common golden everlasting flowers will be found as valuable as the bunches of red holly berries in giving colour and relief to the masses of green. Chrysanthemum flowers may be used for the same purpose. For those parts of the decoration where extra ornamentation is appropriate, as in the font and about the altar, Christmas roses may be introduced, and camellias; and a considerable variety of everlasting flowers, of beautiful shape and colour, which have been introduced into our greenhouses of late years, will be found very useful.

Having formed your general plan, and collected your evergreens and flowers from all the gardens and greenhouses to which you can obtain access, the next thing to be done is to learn how to manufacture the long trails of green, whose straight and curved lines compose the great mass of the decorations.

We have seen them made of ivy leaves sewn upon a band of green calico, but the effect is not good; and we desire at the outset to warn tyros against the fabrication of any decorations—wreaths, or devices, or texts—in this manner. Near at hand, and in a good light, where the varied outline of the leaves and the play of light and shade are distinctly visible, the effect is pleasing enough; but at a distance, and in such a light as is usual in the interior of a Church in winter time, the effect is simply that of a flat band of green; the green calico, without the foliage upon it, would look very nearly as well.

The most beautiful wreaths are formed of a rope or band of evergreen sprigs. There are some varieties in the way in which such a wreath may be made; one way is as follows:—Get a rope of proper length, and a quantity of twine, and a handful of evergreen twigs; begin at one end of the rope; dispose a bunch of the twigs round the rope, and tie them on with the twine; then dispose another bunch so that their leaves may conceal the stalks of those already on, and give the twine a turn round them; and so on until the whole rope is finished. The twine need not be tied at the fastening of each bunch of twigs, but passed round and round the cord; but the work will be more secure if the twine is looped at each fastening, and not merely passed round. A considerable difference in the appearance of the wreath, and in the material and time occupied in its fabrication, is made by the density or sparseness with which the twigs are disposed. We have seen them with the twigs so small and so thickly placed, that the result was a thick rough rope, which reminded one of the "sallies" with which Church bell-ropes are provided; and, on the other hand, we have seen the twigs so large, and so thinly put on, that the effect was meagre, and spoke of haste, or indolence, or want of taste. Another way of fabricating wreaths, which we ourselves prefer, is as follows:—Instead of a rope foundation to fasten the twigs upon, use only a piece of stout twine to run through the wreath, so as to prevent its falling to pieces; and instead of twine to tie the twigs on, use fine wire—iron will do, brass is better. Instead of making the wreath round, make it flat; thus:—take a bunch of twigs, keeping the stalks tolerably long, and fasten them together with wire; add a few more twigs, fastening them with a cast or two of the wire to the stalks of those already on; and so work downwards; always arranging the twigs so as to show well to the

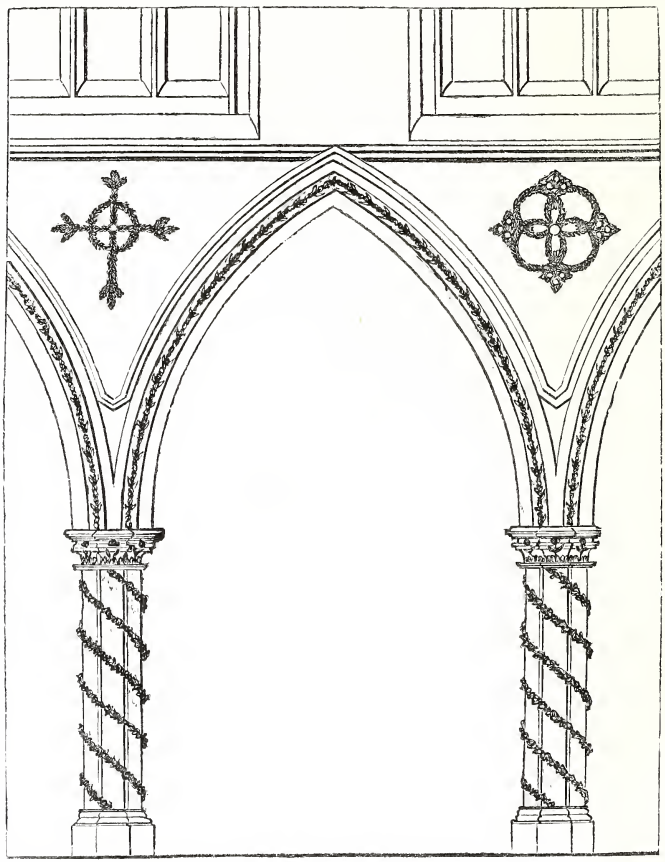
front, and always keeping the twine running through the wreath. The wreath is in this manner much more easily made, and so far as our experience extends, is more effective than the rope wreaths. In all kinds of wreaths the thickness and density of the wreath must be carefully regulated at the outset, according to the requirements of the Church and the taste of the decorator, and then evenly maintained throughout. For a short massive pillar, a tolerably thick wreath is desirable; for a pillar of lighter proportions, it may be of lighter texture. Care must be taken that all the foliage is turned in one direction, especially where two persons are working at the same rope; for it is not an uncommon blunder with novices for two to begin zealously at opposite ends of the same wreath, and to find, when they meet in the middle, that they have not only made their respective halves of different thicknesses, but also turning opposite ways. It is better for the most experienced person among the decorators to make a small wreath for a pattern, and for the rest to work according to it, each wreath being made by one person. The wreaths may be made of one kind of evergreen only, or of any number of kinds mixed; the latter has the better effect. There should be a due admixture of the fine kinds, as yew, arbor vitæ, box, &c., to keep the wreath light and sprayey. The bunches of berries or flowers, or variegated holly sprigs, which are as valuable as flowers, may be stuck in afterwards when the green line is finished, or even when the wreath is fixed in its place. On a foundation of lath or iron-rod the sprigs are fastened in the same way, but with greater ease and rapidity.

Having taught in a general way how to manufacture these straight and curved lines of evergreen, we proceed in the next place to suggest the various ways in which they may be applied to the decoration of the Church. These lines of green may be applied with very beautiful effect, so as to bring out the chief architectural lines of the building, to the pillars and arches which separate the nave and chancel from their aisles, and the nave from the chancel; to the arches of the windows and doors; and to the horizontal wall plates and string courses of the walls. In this application of our foliage and floral decorations we shall be following the method of the architects, who in rich and elaborate work used to emphasize these lines by this very method of introducing sculptured foliage and flowers into them. We have thus the satisfaction of knowing that we are decorating our Church on the most correct artistic principles, and in the very way which the architect of the building would himself have approved.

IV.

Pillars.

WHEN the Church has rows of pillars and arches between the nave and its aisles, they afford an opportunity for introducing what is always the most pleasing portion of



NO. II.—DECORATIONS OF PILLARS AND ARCHES AND WALL DEVICES.

the decorations. Let the capitals have a chaplet of green and flowers round them, and the pillars be adorned with a spiral wreath. The accompanying woodcut will show at a glance the principle on which this is to be done. To begin with the PILLARS. The flexible cords of green, whose fabrication we have described, are to be turned round the shafts of the pillars in the way exhibited in the cut. The ends are to be fastened to a string tied firmly round the pillar, *under* the neck moulding of the capital, and *above* the upper moulding of the base. These will afford the necessary points of suspension and tension, without driving in nails. They who remember the beautiful wreathed pillar in Rosslyn Chapel will see that this is only to imitate in actual foliage the beautiful effect which the Portuguese architect has there produced in sculptured stone. It is desirable to measure carefully the length of the rope or twine which will be required for each pillar before beginning to make the wreath upon it.

There are a few practical hints to be given as to the application of the spiral wreath to a pillar. Take care that the wreath is not put upside down ; foliage must never be put in a direction contrary to that of its growth. Do not let the spiral line be too horizontal ; an angle of 45 degrees with the horizon is the best. But when the line is coiled at this angle it will often go so few times round the pillar that the effect is poor. To remedy this let there be two spirals fastened at top on opposite sides of the pillar, and carried down parallel with each other. This is the way in which the wreathed pillars in the wood-cut are arranged, and the effect is admirable. To a short massive pillar, such as we find in Norman arcades, it may be necessary to apply three or more wreaths in order to get the desired richness of decoration.

Care must be bestowed too upon the direction of the spiral line, and the more care because it is curious that some persons seem to be unconscious when the spiral lines of neighbouring pillars do not agree. All the pillars on the same side, at least, should have the spiral line running in the same direction. Some artistic decorators maintain the same direction of the spiral throughout the Church ; others make the wreaths spire differently on the different sides of the Church, turning both so that to a spectator at the west end of the nave they coil towards, and so lead the eye up to, the altar. The responds (half pillars at each end of an arcade) should be treated as half pillars ; short lengths of wreath should be coiled round them, to make them match the rest of the piers of the arcade.

Some decorators do not wreathe all the pillars, but treat the alternate pillars with vertical lines of wreath carried from capital

to base, as shown in the north-east pillar in our Frontispiece. This may especially be done where the pillars are alternately round and octagonal, or where the shafts are clustered, though it may as easily be done where all the pillars are plain round. In a clustered pillar, the wreaths will be placed in the hollows; where it is octagonal, on the centre of the faces, either on all the faces or only on four of them, viz., the diagonal faces; and on a round pillar, in corresponding positions. When it is desired to economise material and labour, it may suffice to put only the two vertical wreaths which are visible from the nave. These vertical wreaths may be made with great facility by tying the evergreens upon splines, after the method to be presently described. A variety may be made in the treatment of a clustered pillar by using continuous trails of ivy with bunches of its black berries fastened at intervals; or by using single detached sprigs of holly with its red berries placed at intervals; either of these decorations may be fastened to a light lath, or osier rod, or wire, and so applied to the hollow moulding.

A very piquant effect may be produced by throwing off sprays of foliage at intervals from the spiral wreath, in the manner indicated in the middle pillar of the south side of our Frontispiece; or, for a variety, two wreaths may be crossed in the manner shown in the south-east pillar of the Frontispiece.

V.

Capitals.

THE CAPITALS of the piers ought to be decorated with a chaplet. This chaplet must be applied to the capital round its bell, *i. e.* the swelling portion of the capital between the neck and the upper mouldings. A length of the wreath which we have recommended for the pillars will make a very effective chaplet for the capital; it should, perhaps, be made a little more light and sprayey, and a little appropriate richness of decoration may be given to it by applying to it larger and more frequent bunches of holly berries. Or, a piece of

twine may be fastened round the bell, and sprigs of evergreens stuck in it. It will facilitate the making of the chaplet thus if one person holds the two ends of the twine, so as to give it a little play, and yet keep it tight, while another adjusts the sprigs; then tie it when all is arranged. There is abundant room for ingenuity and taste in the fabrication of a chaplet in this manner. Ivy leaves may be disposed regularly upon the bell, springing out of the neck, their regular and piquant forms telling admirably against the white stone; or quatrefoils of holly leaves, with berries in the centre of each quatrefoil, may be thus arranged on the bell of the capital, or foliage may be arranged upon the bell in imitation of the way in which the old sculptors arrange their stone foliage on sculptured capitals. Or, if more elaborate and artificial decorations are used elsewhere, a more elaborate chaplet of leaves and flowers may appropriately be introduced here.

Illustrations of some of the methods thus described, and indications of other varieties, will be found in our Frontispiece, and in the woodcut of an arch given on page 20.

The pews will very much interfere with the decoration of the lower part of the piers. Where there are open benches, so that the Bases are partially seen, they may have a wreath round them just below the neck. Some decorators lay a large loose wreath round the bottom of the base, and continue the lower end of the shaft wreath so as to lose itself in this base wreath; but we prefer the severer style above described.

VI.

Arches.

THERE are three ways of decorating arches: to put a trail of green over the hood-moulding, or in a hollow of the arch-mouldings, or under the soffit of the arch.

These trails should be made upon osier wands, or upon roofing laths; they are not only more easily made so, and more easily put up in their places, but they have this great advantage, that they may be put up either entirely without nails, or with a very small

number of nails. A lath of proper length may be forced into a hollow moulding, or under the soffit of an arch, and will keep its place without any nails at all; in any case of difficulty, where the lath will not stay in its place, a little wedge of wood will make it fit more tightly, or a block of wood jammed tightly across a moulding will afford a firm point to fasten to, without injury to the stone work. If osier rods, or wreaths made on rope or twine, be laid over the hood-moulding, they will perhaps require one nail at the apex of the arch and one on each side at the spring of the arch; and let the nails be driven firmly in at first, and be touched over with paint of the same colour as the wall, that they may be as little visible as possible; and let them remain permanently, for the decorations to be tied to year after year.

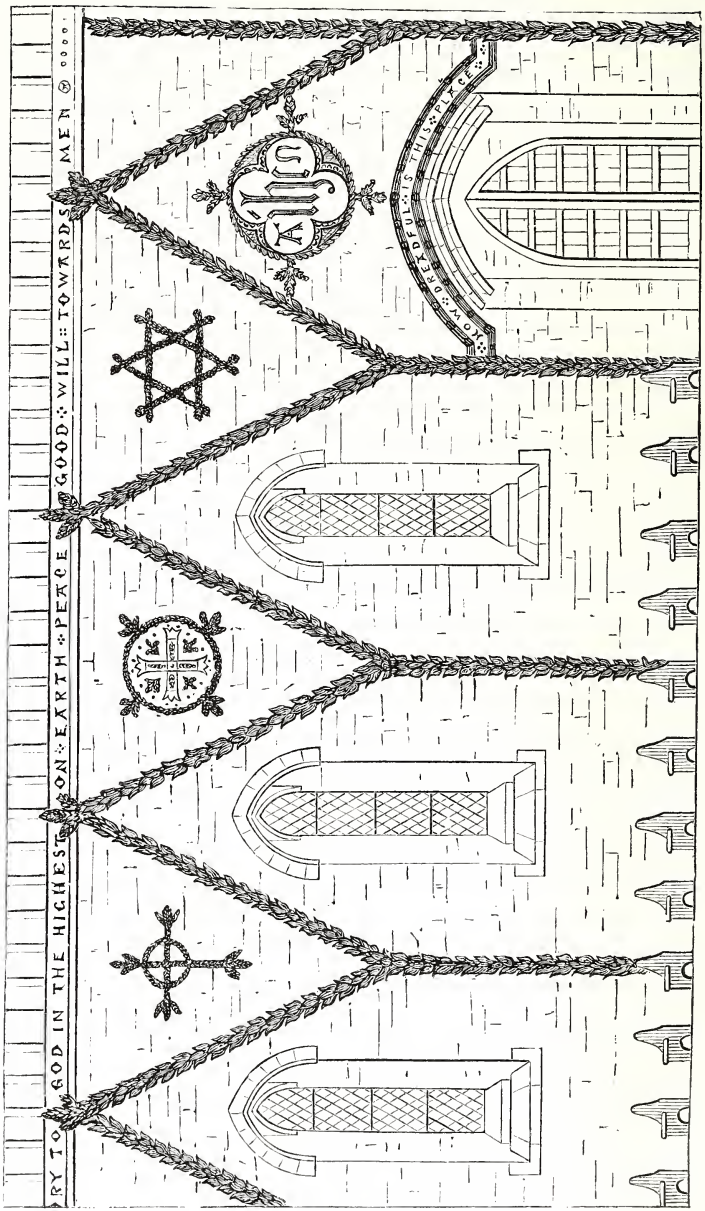
In all these modes of applying decoration to arches the following methods of making the decorations may be adopted. First, sprigs of evergreen may be tied continuously on the rod or lath, after the fashion of the wreaths already described; a trail over the hood-moulding may be of ivy only; if the decorator please, he may put little sprigs of the foliage here and there to imitate crocketing, and a nicely-disposed bunch at the apex by way of finial will make a good finish, and at the same time conceal the junction of the two rods. These crockets and finials may be made by putting separate leaves on wire stalks and tying the wires together. Secondly, quatrefoils of holly leaves, or other similar devices of foliage, may be stitched together and then tacked to the lath with a nail at proper intervals, in imitation of the ball flowers and Tudor leaves with which the architects enrich their mouldings; or different kinds and tints of foliage may be used in short lengths; or the alternate lengths may be left without foliage, and the lath wrapped spirally with a band of red—common red bordering, such as is used for window-curtains, will do—giving something the effect of tooth-moulding. It must be borne in mind that when the decorations are to be applied to the soffit of the arch they must be made on the *face* of the lath; when they are to be applied in a hollow moulding of the arch, or over the hood-moulding, they must be made on the *side* of the lath. In putting up the arch decorations care must be taken to make the foliage turn the right way, *i. e.* pointing upwards on both sides of the arch; and it is to be noted as a general rule that foliage is never to be put in a position contrary to that of its growth.

In large Churches it is a very difficult operation to put decorations round the arches, and involves the use of long ladders and of men accustomed to the dangerous work of climbing and working upon them. But in small Churches it is not very diffi-

cult: fix your ladder to the middle of one side of the arch; take up the rod or lath by the middle, and mount, carrying it under the ladder; first fit the upper end into its place, and then with a thrust the lath will bend to the arch, the lower end will slip into its place on the capital, and it is done. If the rod is to go over the hood-moulding, first fit the small end of the rod well under the nail at the apex, bend it over the hood, and slip the lower end under the nail at the spring of the arch; it may, perhaps, require a tie with a piece of twine at each end to prevent it from slipping.

The Chancel Arch should be more highly decorated than any other. Perhaps the best effect will be produced by a straight line of green applied to the front of the half-pillars on each side, and under the soffit of the arch. The whole opening of the chancel arch will thus be fringed with foliage. Then another line of green may be placed over the hood of the arch, and continued down the side of the half-pillar; or, still better, a gable or pediment of green lines may be placed over the chancel arch, after the fashion suggested in the cuts on pp. 26 and 68. The capitals, too, of the chancel arch should be more highly decorated than those of the nave.

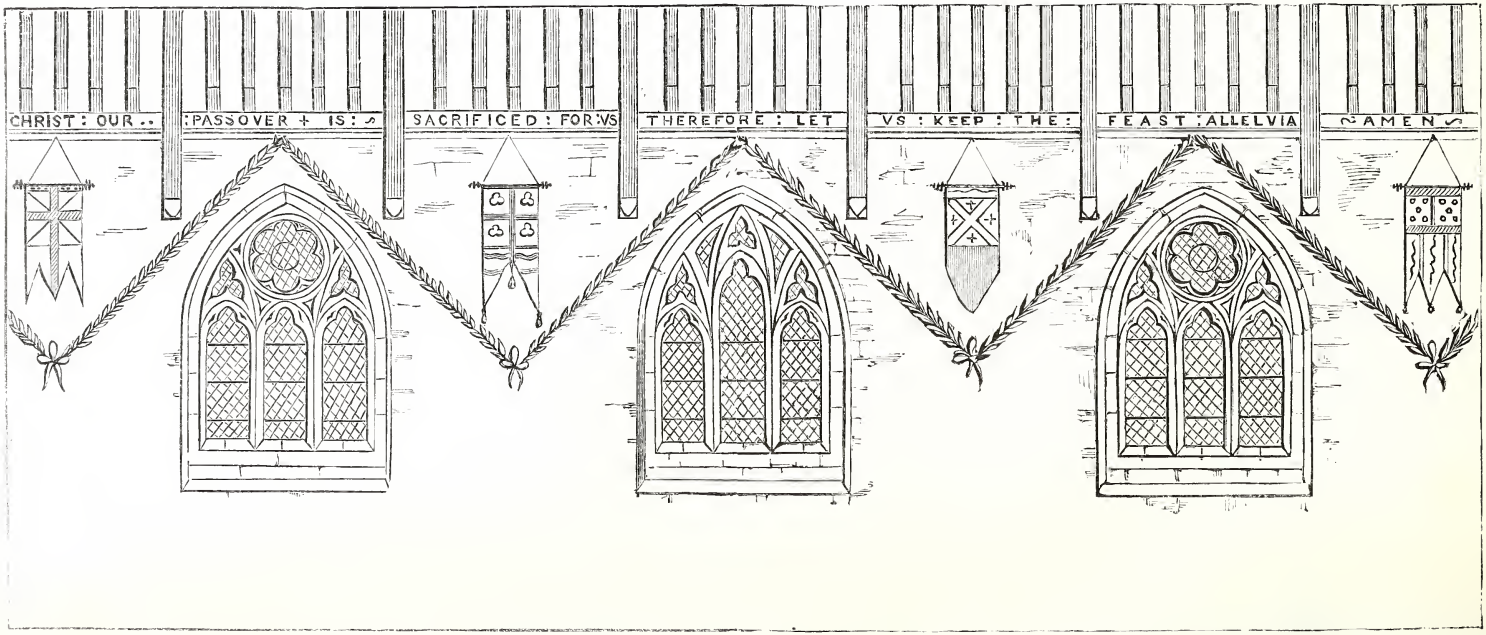
Chancels usually have no aisles, and in small Churches the nave frequently has none. A very effective way of treating an aisleless chancel or nave is to make pillars and arches of evergreen against the wall, of about the same size that the arcade of an aisle would be, so that the windows shall (if they are regularly placed) come into the middle of the arches. Put a good bunch of green to represent the capital of the pillar, and give it force by decorating it with berries or flowers. Or a very nice effect may be produced by putting arches of green round the margin of the window-splays, and continuing the line of green down to a string course of green running horizontally under the windows. The effect will be still richer if similar arches are formed upon the blank-wall spaces between the windows, so as to make a continuous arcade. If the wall-spaces are wide in proportion to the width across the window-splay, it may be necessary to divide the wall-space into two arches; or into one of the same size as the window arch, with a narrower and lower arch on each side. The blank arches may be filled in with some of the wall devices which we shall presently speak of. Where mock pillars and arches have been formed against the wall, if the windows fall regularly in the middle of the arches, a very rich effect may be produced by edging the margin of the window-splays also with lines of green. In this case the pillars and arches may be formed of broad full lines of mixed evergreen, and the window arches of a narrower line of yew. The lighter and fuller arches and pillars



NO. III.—WALL ARCADE AND DOORWAY.

will stand off from the wall, while the flatter, smaller, darker decoration of the window margins will make them recede, and thus a kind of perspective will be produced which will very much add to the effect of the Church. The arches of which we have spoken are best formed on a frame-work of bent iron rod; hazel or osier wands do not bend into true curves. The rod may be suspended by a nail from the apex. The openings of the doors should be treated in the same way as the windows. If there is a string course it may be emphasized by a line of green; if there is not an architectural string course, one of green may be made. A line of green may also be put under the wall plate by way of foliaged cornice. The straight-sided arches are much the most easily made, and are very effective. They may be used, indeed, with excellent effect over architectural arches wherever they occur—in arcades, windows, or doors—instead of, or in addition to, the line of green, following the curve of the arch. The gable over the arch, Mr. Ruskin tells us, is the very element of Gothic art; at least, it is a very beautiful combination. On the opposite page we give a woodcut (No. 3) of an arcade of straight-sided arches, in order to make more intelligible a very useful arrangement, and to give some idea of its general effect. The manufacture of the framework is very simple. The straight lines are composed of slating laths, which may be fastened together with a single screw at each joint, so that the joint will turn on a rude hinge. This will make it easier to carry the decoration about, and will enable it to be set up in its place with the smallest possible number of fastenings to the wall. This frame-work of laths is to be covered with evergreen in the manner described in our former paper. The wall spaces between the arches may be left plain, or may be filled in, as represented in the woodcut, or with any of the wall devices described at pp. 30—34. A banner, of which we shall presently give some models, may be hung from the bases of the straight-sided arches, the foot of the staff being lodged in the angle, and the banner supported at a proper inclination by means of a cord carried up to a nail or tenterhook in the wall or in the wall-plate.

We give another illustration on the next page (No. 4) of a Perpendicular aisle, treated still more simply than in the last instance; it is a design which was carried out in the decorations of St. Matthias's, Stoke Newington, last Easter. The design is nothing more than a zig-zag of green lines, which have the effect of a kind of simple canopy over the windows. The wall spaces might be decorated with any of the wall devices already or hereafter given: we have, however, filled them in with banners, to show how these very valuable decorations, upon which we are going to enlarge presently, may be introduced in such situations.



NO. IV.—WALL DECORATION.

In the western bay of the illustration (No. 3) we have indicated the manner in which a doorway may be treated. The reader may judge of the very pleasing effect which may be thus produced by covering the rest of the woodcut with his hand or with a slip of paper. Over the doorway, it will be seen, is a text, with a border of evergreen, which follows the line of the arch.

VII.

Wall Devices.

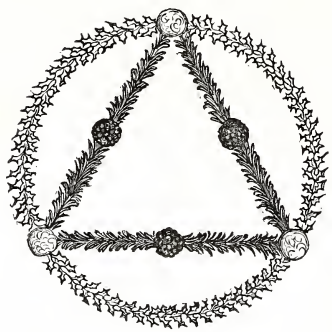
HAVING decorated our arcades, or made arcades where they do not exist, our attention will be next attracted to the plain bare spaces of wall, the spandrels between the arches, and the wall spaces between the aisle windows. These may be enriched with devices made of evergreens, or with texts on panels and scrolls and ribands, or with both. We shall consider first the wall devices. Our difficulty here is that one who is accustomed to such work can sit down and sketch off a hundred different devices in half as many minutes, which it would be very long and tedious to describe, and very costly to engrave. All that we can do then is by pen and pencil* to suggest a few leading types, and to leave it to the ingenuity of each decorator to vary and multiply them for himself.

The most usual wall devices are of geometrical shape, made of hoops or wire or laths, covered with sprigs of evergreen tied or nailed on their face, and enriched with holly berries and flowers. A hoop from the nearest basket-maker's will furnish a foundation for a *Circle*, which you may form of sprigs of yew, arbor vitæ, box, holly, &c., tied on the hoop, or of a double row of laurels fastened on regularly, after the fashion of a conqueror's wreath. If you make a laurel wreath of it, you may tie it at the lower side with a bunch of red or blue riband; you may place within it an A, and in a corresponding circle an Ω; the letters may be

* For the majority of the drawings which illustrate this work, and for many valuable suggestions, we are indebted to the kindness of James Brooks, Esq., Architect, 5, Bloomsbury-square, who was, perhaps, the first to introduce what we have called the architectural style of floral decoration, and who has had great experience in its practice.

made of card, and covered over with laurel leaves, or green sprigs, or holly berries, or yellow everlastings, and fastened in the middle of the circle to two invisible cross wires; or you may stretch a piece of white paper or white calico across the circle, and put the letters on this ground either with paint or coloured cloth.

A piece of iron wire may be bent into a *Trefoil,* or *Quatrefoil,* or *Multifoil,* or laths may be tied into a *Triangle,* to be covered with green sprigs tied on; and a pretty finish may be given to such devices by placing in the middle a trefoil or quatrefoil formed of large single holly leaves or ivy leaves, with a bunch of berries or everlastings for a centre. A quatrefoil forms a good border for any cruciform device. Within a multifoil may be placed a star of single laurel leaves, with a bunch of holly berries or everlastings for a centre.



NO. V.—WALL ORNAMENT.

In the device of which we here give a woodcut, the circle and triangle are combined. The circle is covered with holly sprigs, the triangle with arbor vitæ or box sprigs; the points of the triangle are ornamented with bunches of everlastings, the central points of the sides of the triangle with bunches of holly berries.

The next illustration is a combination of a triangle and a trefoil; the triangle covered with arbor vitæ or box, the foils with holly; the bunches are all of everlastings; the bunches on the sides of the triangles might be of holly berries.



NO. VI.—WALL ORNAMENT.

A very favourite device is a *Double Triangle,* which is capable of considerable variety of treatment. Both triangles may be covered uniformly with mixed greens tied on, or one triangle may be covered with holly and the other with yew. The effect may be heightened by putting a row of berries or everlastings along the middle, or a double row along the sides of the triangles; or the illumination may be confined to the six rays which are formed by the projecting points of the triangles; or

bunches of berries or of everlastings, or of both alternately, may be placed at intervals; or the triangles may be bound together with strings of berries, or a zig-zag line of strung berries may be carried along all the sides of the triangles. Where different evergreens are used for the two triangles, the holly may be illuminated with its own berries, and the yew with everlastings.

The woodcut represents a very simple but effective variety of this type. It is made of two triangles of thin laths fastened one behind another; one triangle is covered with arbor vitæ, the other with holly, and they interlace. The laths do not actually interlace, but the effect of interlacing is very simply effected by making a gap at the intersection of the laths in the holly decorations and carrying the arbor vitæ through, and *vice versâ*. The points are finished with triplets of ivy leaves carried on wire stalks.



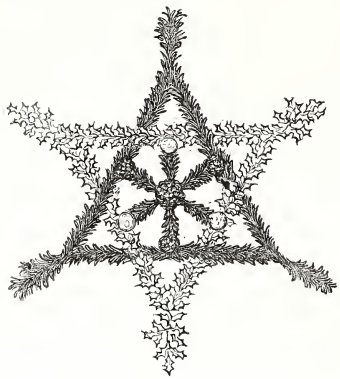
NO. VII. —WALL ORNAMENT.

The central hexagonal space, which is formed by the intersecting lines of the two triangles, presents an opportunity for additional ingenuity. It may be crossed with wire covered with light sprigs of arbor vitæ or box: a star of laurel leaves, with an eye of berries or everlastings, may be placed in the centre; or a camellia flower in a star of its own leaves; or a wreath of everlastings may be suspended in the centre; or, if flowers are used in the decorations, and the device is to be placed in an important position—on the front of the cover of the Communion Table, or on the Font, or Pulpit—you may cover the triangles with laurel or camellia leaves, and put a flower at each point and at each intersection; and, further, in the hexagon you may fasten with invisible wires a light garland of camellias alternately red and white, formed on a circle of wire.

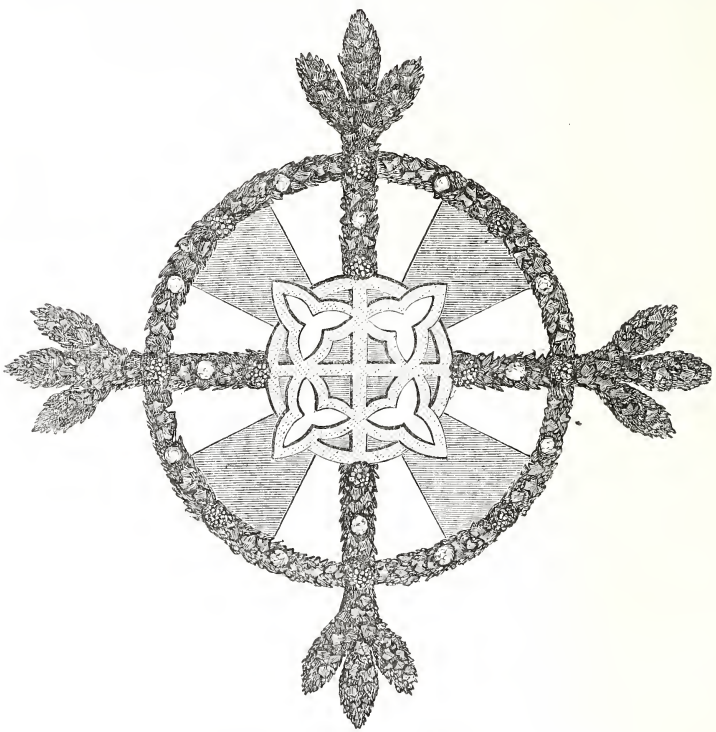
The one of which we give a representation on the next page is of much more simple fashion. One triangle is of arbor vitæ or box, the other of holly, interlacing. In the central ornament the radii are of arbor vitæ, the central boss is of mixed immortelles and holly berries, and the bunches on the sides of the hexagon are alternately of immortelles and holly berries; the points of each triangle are finished with sprigs of the same evergreen with which it is covered.

There is no limit to the variety of *Cruciform Devices* which

may be formed with a few bits of lath and wire. Two are indicated in the cut of the Arch on p. 20. The device, of which we give a woodcut below, is an example of the more elaborate cruciform devices; it is taken with some alterations, from one which was used at the west end of St. Matthew's Church, City-road, London, some years ago. The large cross and circle are of wood covered with arbor vitæ, and heightened in effect by bunches of holly berries fastened on, and ivy leaves, carefully selected, and fastened merely by having their stalks stuck in under the arbor vitæ sprigs. The field of the



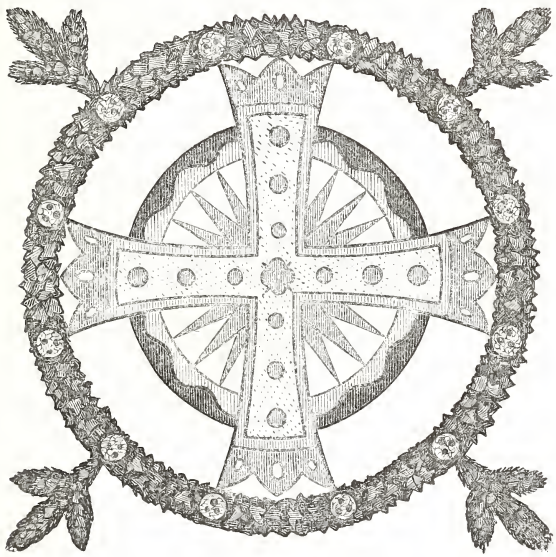
NO. VIII.—WALL ORNAMENT.



NO. IX.—WALL ORNAMENT.

circle is of red and white cambric, or silk, or velvet. The central ornament has its outline formed of immortelles, and its blank spaces filled in with red and white cambric, silk, or velvet, as indicated in the drawing, where the vertical shading represents the red. Beautiful foliated terminations may be made to these cruciform devices, of laurel, ivy, or holly leaves mounted on stalks of wire. The intersections of the lines may be enriched with single leaves feathered off with light sprigs of arbor vitæ, or cedar, or yew.

The next example (No. 10) is thus constructed. The outer circle is a hoop covered with evergreen, and ornamented with

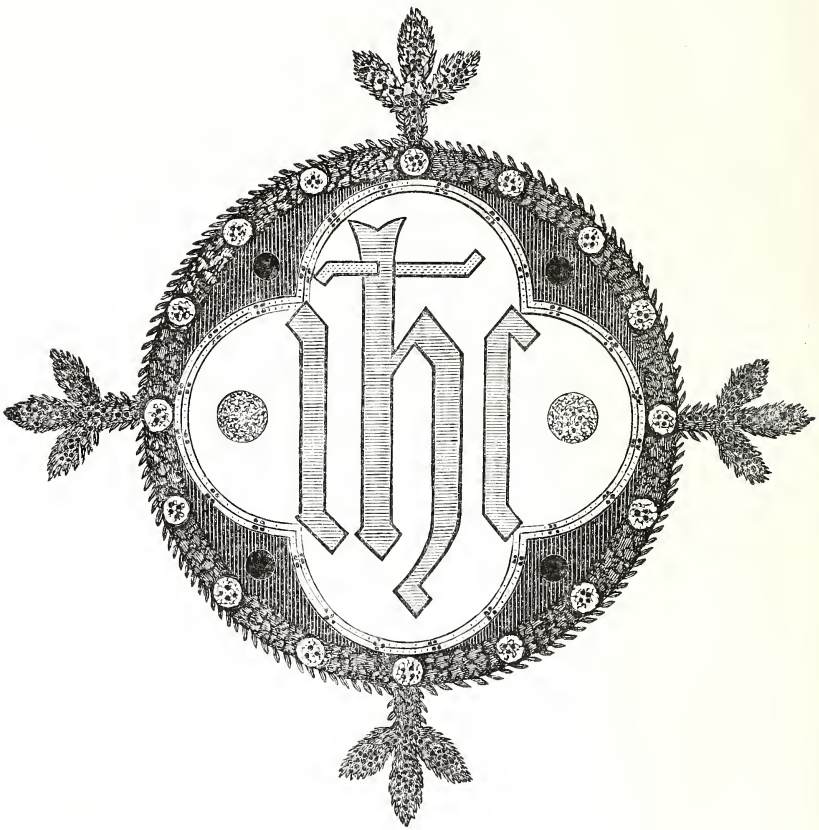


NO. X.—WALL ORNAMENT.

bunches of red and yellow everlasting flowers. At the back of the hoop is strained a circle of white glazed calico, which forms the ground of the cruciform device. The cross is left white, and jewelled with little circles of red cloth pasted upon the ground. The margin of the cross is green cloth pasted upon the ground. The extremities of the cross represent four crowns, and may, if it is desired, be made still more like crowns in their outline. They are of red cloth, with little circles cut out to show the white ground beneath. The rays which proceed from the cross are also of red cloth pasted on. The circle which represents the crown of thorns, running through the limbs of the cross, is of two colours, divided by the waving line; the inner colour is green

and the outer colour purple, both of cloth pasted on; or the cross and the ground of the inner circle may be of gold-coloured cloth, pasted upon the white ground.

The next device (No. 11) is thus constructed: the outer circle is a hoop, covered with evergreen, ornamented with everlastings, and with white glazed calico strained behind, as in the former device. The quatrefoil is of wire, covered with yellow everlastings, jewelled at intervals with red everlastings. The spandrels between the circle and quatrefoil are covered with purple cloth, pasted on the calico ground, with a spot of black



NO. XI.—WALL ORNAMENT.

cloth. The letters of the sacred monogram are cut out of red cloth and pasted on, the horizontal stroke through the top of the H being of gold-coloured cloth, and the ornamental bosses on

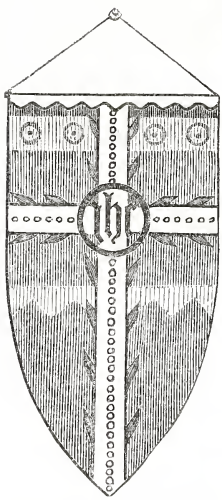
each side of the monogram of a bunch of yellow and red everlastings. Some of our readers may be glad to have the meaning of the monogram explained, for it is by no means obvious, and involves a curious and interesting piece of ecclesiastical symbolism. It is composed of the old English letters I.H.C. They are sometimes written I.H.S., and are popularly taken to be the initials of the three words Iesus Hominum Salvator, *i.e.*, Jesus the Saviour of mankind. But in reality they are a transcript into Roman letters of the old Greek monogram ΙΗΣ., *i.e.*, I.E.S.; the first three letters of the name of IESOVS. The stroke over the top, which looks as if it were intended only for an ornamental filling in of the design, is the usual mark that the word over which it is placed is contracted. The corresponding monogram, which may be introduced in a similar frame work as a pendant to the one here given, is XP, which are the Greek letters Ch R, the inital letters of the name CHRISTOS.

The same devices, on a smaller scale, may be used for the decoration of the panels of a font or pulpit; only, in that case, the material must be slightly modified. The white glazed calico, which has a wonderful effect, like satin, at a distance, looks only like glazed calico when near the eye. White cloth or white velvet should be used instead for the ground of smaller devices; the evergreen border must be made of smaller evergreens, and instead of bunches of everlastings, and spots of red and white cloth, red and white camellias, and other flowers, may be introduced. The decorator will find in the wall devices, given in the Frontispiece, and in the illustrations of the wall devices, suggestions of other patterns which, with a little ingenuity and good taste, may be successfully treated in the more elaborate style indicated in these two examples.

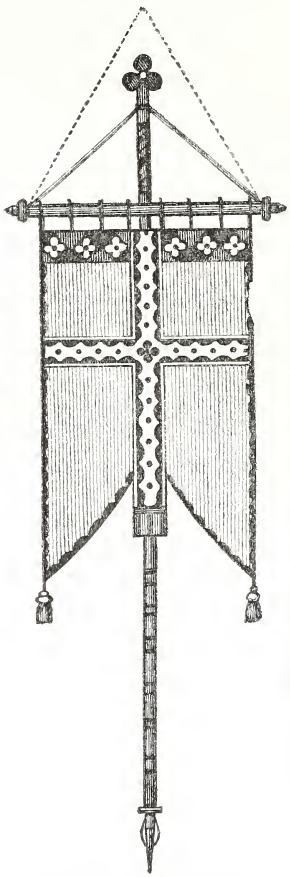
VIII.

Banners.

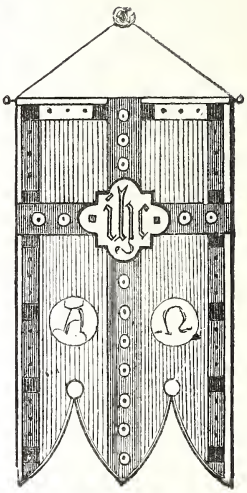
OUR Church interiors are usually very cold in colour; it is one of the greatest faults they have. Stained glass, wherever it is introduced, does much to remedy the



NO. XII.—BANNER.



NO. XIII.—BANNER.



NO. XIV.—BANNER.

defect; but it still leaves something to be desired in the arcades and vacant wall spaces.

Our foliage decorations are of the soberest hues of green, and not a little of their pleasing effect depends upon the bunches of red berries with which they illuminate the Church. A still further judicious introduction of colour will be found to add greatly to the general effect of the decorations. This may be accomplished, so far as the walls are concerned, partly by the texts, partly by introducing colour into the wall devices in the way we have described. There is another method of getting a little colour into the body of the Church by means of *Banners* suspended from the walls, or hung out from the capitals of the piers, which will be found very effective. Let the reader call to mind the banners of the Knights of the Garter hung over their stalls in St. George's Chapel, Windsor; or the tattered banners of arms which still remain, with sword, spurs, and helmet, as monumental trophies, in some of our country Churches; or even the school flags which have been carried into Church on the school-feast day, and reared up against a pillar; and he will at once remember the beautiful effect produced by the heraldic colours and by the flowing folds of the drapery, stirred now and then by a passing draught, contrasting with the rigid architectural lines. We venture to suggest the introduction of this pleasing method of heightening the effect of our Church decorations; and we give a few examples of different forms in which these banners may be made. First, the pinnacles of a screen may be terminated with little banners made of cardboard, and painted with symbols or coats of arms. The simplest form of the lance pennon consists of a long-pointed strip of material, which may be carried on a short rod cut out of the nearest copse, with a strip of coloured material rolled spirally around it. Next in order of elaboration is the triangular banner. It is the half of a banner cut diagonally, and the decorator must be careful to make it of the right shape, and to attach it correctly to its staff. A parallelogram of material longer than it is wide, divided diagonally, will make two of them. The long side of the original parallelogram is to be applied to the staff with the right angle at the bottom. A long swallow-tailed streamer is next in simplicity. It is the heraldic shape of a knight's pennon, and may very properly be charged with the arms of the patron, or any other which might with propriety be introduced in stained glass into the windows, or on a hatchment on the walls of the Church. The shield-shaped banner (No. 12), of which we give an illustration, may be charged with similar arms, or with any Christian symbol. The one which we give as a specimen has a green ground, the cross upon it is white, with a line of green and gold lace running

through the centre of the cross. The central monogram has letters cut out of red cloth and applied upon a gold-coloured circle. The vandyked edge at the top of the shield should also be of white or gold lace. The lace of which we speak in the description of this and the other banners may be bought in a great variety of patterns and colours of the manufacturers and dealers in mediæval draperies, *e. g.* of Messrs. Jones and Willis, 27, Great Russell-street, London, and Birmingham. The next example (No. 13) has a gold-coloured ground, a cross of white and red lace, which, it will be observed, is carried down below the cleft of the swallow-tail, and terminates in a fringe; the upper margin may be of purple cloth, with the quatrefoils cut out to show the gold-coloured ground beneath, with a red spot applied in the centre of each quatrefoil. The lower points are furnished with a tassel of red and gold. The third example (No. 14) has a white ground; the cross is of gold with red spots; and the central quatrefoil has a white ground, with gold monogram edged with red. The border of the banner is of gold, with red spots and little squares of green. The material of these banners—depending upon the degree of cost which it is proposed to expend upon them—may be bunting, cambric, or silk. The crosses, borders, &c., may be sewed or pasted on. If pasted, make the paste with glue water, *i.e.* boil a little glue for a long time in water, and make the paste in the ordinary way with this water, and it will resist the damp, or even a shower of rain. The arms of the See, or the symbol of the saint to whom the Church is dedicated, will afford appropriate devices for these banners, and they may be made useful not only for the Church decoration, but also for the school processions and similar occasions.

IX.

Texts.

A VERY effective way of filling wall spaces, and adding to the decoration of the Church, is by putting up appropriate texts in suitable positions, in accordance with the spirit of the 82nd Canon. There are various ways of forming the

texts. One favourite way is to cut out the letters in cardboard, and to sew evergreen leaves on the cardboard. This method has several disadvantages. When the text is at a distance from the eye, the forms of leaves of the same colour are lost, and the letters look of uniform green colour with an irregular outline. Again, these letters are usually tacked separately on the wall, which makes a very undesirable number of nail-holes in the wall; or, if they are stitched on calico or cloth, their weight makes it difficult to keep the calico properly stretched. If, however, the text is to be sufficiently near to the eye, our first objection to this method of forming the letters vanishes; and if the letters be fastened to a board covered over with paper or calico, the second objection will also be removed.

Another method is to cut the letters out of cloth of one colour, and to stitch or paste them upon a ground of cloth of another colour (most commonly red on white, or white or yellow on red), and then to put a border of evergreen round the text. Where the text is to be small and near the eye, this may be done with very rich effect; the ground may be treated as a riband, lined with a contrasting colour, the ends fringed and allowed to hang down; in the text over the side screen from St. Matthew's, City-road, given at p. 53, the riband is of yellow velvet, lined and fringed with red, and the letters are of red cloth fastened upon it. One of the most effective grounds for a text of red cloth letters is glazed white calico, which at a distance, has all the effect of brilliant white satin.

But for ordinary texts to be placed upon a wall the cheapest, easiest, and most satisfactory method is simply to paint the letters on strong white paper, and to surround the text with a broad margin or frame of evergreen. As this is the method which we recommend, we have taken pains to qualify ourselves to give to our readers minute directions as to the practice of it. The paper to be used is such as is used for brass rubbings; it may be obtained of paper-hangers under the name of lining-paper. The first requisite is to get a good alphabet, one which is both handsome in form and readable by the whole congregation. Lombardic capitals, simply formed, combine these two qualities. The letters of our own pattern alphabet are four inches high, which will be found a very convenient size. Draw carefully on strong cardboard a whole alphabet of the size you want for the letters in your texts, and cut each letter out carefully; this is to form your pattern alphabet. Having made it, the rest of your work is easy. Cut your paper the size your text is to be—noting this, that to make it strong enough to avoid risk of easily tearing, it is better that the paper should be doubled three-fold; pick out the letters from your pattern

alphabet, lay them down upon the paper, and arrange them properly at proper distances. Having the letters loose gives you great facility for arranging them, especially where the text is to curve over an arch. When the letters are adjusted to your satisfaction, run a lead pencil round the edge of each, and your text is sketched out. Then, to paint it. First decide in what style it is to be painted. Plain red letters on the white paper ground is the easiest, and is very satisfactory in appearance; or you may paint the ground red, leaving the letters white, and you may enrich it by diapering the red ground with gold; or you may paint your ground of a pale green and the letters red, leaving a narrow white margin round each letter; this, with the dark evergreen border, will have a very pleasing effect. In all these varieties it will make the letters more clear and distinct if you outline them with a strong black line. You may enrich the texts *ad libitum; e. g.* if you have red letters on a white ground, first draw a line of gold round the outline of the letters, and then, to make them more clear and distinct, a strong black line; if you like, enrich the border of the text with a margin of white quatrefoils on a red ground. If you have white letters on a red ground, you may cross-hatch the ground with gold lines, and run a line of white quatrefoils, with a strong black dot in the centre, along the margin. You may also throw in stops between the words; or a crown, or a cruciform, or other device, at the beginning and end of a text; and these ornamental accessories you may illuminate with red, and white, and blue, and green, and gold.

It may be useful to some of our readers to be told what materials to use in painting their texts; and for the advantage of those who live in country villages, we have ascertained the prices at which a respectable colourman* will supply them free by post. For yellow, orange chrome, No. 2, at 6*d.* per oz. For red, buy the best vermilion, at 6*d.* per oz. For blue, use cobalt, at 4*s.* per oz. For gold, use bronze powder, at 2*s.* 6*d.* per oz.; it makes a quite sufficiently good gold colour, which will keep its brightness for years; an ounce of it will gild half an acre of paper. For green, buy emerald green, at 4*d.* per oz.; and if it is too glaring, tone it down with the least touch of your vermilion. All these colours are in powder; to use them, get some mucilage, at 8*d.* per bottle, mix the mucilage with water to the consistency of common gum-water, and rub in your colour on a

* These prices are given us by Messrs. Brodie and Middleton, 79, Long-acre, London. Probably all other respectable colourmen will supply the same articles at about the same prices. If sent by post, a trifle under the nominal weight will be sent, to make the parcel come under the postage regulations.

palette with a palette-knife, to a consistency suitable for painting with. For black, use lamp-black in cake.

Frame your text on plastering or slating laths tacked together, and fasten your border of mixed evergreens on the frame, taking care that the leaves do not overshadow the text too much.

The appropriate situations for texts are the following:—in a straight line under the wall-plate, as a cornice; or under a string-course; or across the east wall of the chancel; or in a curve over the east window, or chancel arch, or tower arch, or nave arches, or aisle windows. In the wall spaces it will usually be convenient to arrange the texts in the form of a riband, or, perhaps, in a panel framed with a border of evergreen. The simplest way to make a riband is to take a strip of paper of proper width and length, and fold it into the shape of a very squat letter Z; put your text on the two horizontal lines; put your evergreen border all round the margin of the paper, but not along the creases where the paper is folded back; ornament the back of your riband (that is, the oblique strip which connects the two portions of the text) with coloured lines ruled along the margin, or with a diapered ground.

For a tall and narrow space a riband may be formed in a similar way, of paper, making the horizontal portions for receiving the text shorter in length and more in number. One way of forming and finishing such a riband, or scroll, is to make the written portions of the riband not horizontal, but inclined at an angle to the horizon; paint the text in red letters, finish the margin of the text and of the back of the riband with marginal lines of red, and up the middle of the riband put a lath covered with evergreens, and finish at the top with a little cruciform device formed of sprigs, or with a finial of ivy leaves set on wire stalks. The effect will be that of a scroll turned round an evergreen staff.

A perusal of the proper Lessons, Epistle and Gospel, Psalms, &c., for Christmas will suggest to the decorator an abundance of appropriate texts. We give a few of the most obvious ones. For very short texts take:—

Immanuel.

God with us.

Alleluia.

Wonderful Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

For longer ones:—

Glory to God in the Highest. On Earth peace, goodwill towards men.

Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.

Christ is born in Bethlehem.

God and Man is one Christ; God of the substance of his Father; man of the substance of his mother.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

This day is born unto you a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

For a long text, to run round a nave for example, take those verses of the *Te Deum:*

Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ. Thou art the Everlasting Son of the Father. When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man, Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.

An appropriate text to be placed over or upon the Pulpit is:—

Behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy.

In attempting to give some more definite instructions for texts and their borders, there are three ways in which we might do it. The first would be to draw out each suggestion separately, and to have it printed in colours, and so present the whole series of results in a form in which they could be understood and appreciated at a glance. It is a method which would be very agreeable to the reader, and not less agreeable to the writer, since it would save a great deal of difficult and tedious description; but it is a method which would involve an expenditure of some scores of pounds sterling in chromo-lithography. The next best method would be to have the devices all drawn out at length, and to indicate the colours by various lines, in the way which heralds call "tricking." But this method also would involve considerable expense in woodcuts, and would occupy considerable space in these pages; and after all, while it gave the outlines of the device, it would leave the effect of the colouring to the reader's imagination. We are driven then to indicate the various devices which we have to suggest by another method, which it will need a little careful and minute description on our part, and a little careful examination on the reader's part, to make intelligible. In the three texts which we have engraved we have introduced the whole of the pattern alphabet, which we submit for adoption; and instead of running one border pattern round each text, we have applied portions of different borders; so that out of the three texts we get nine different border patterns; which, by different combinations of the patterns, and different systems of colouring, may be multiplied *in infinitum.* We suggest that, before deciding upon any particular border and system of colouring, the operator, by holding the page against a window-pane, may trace from it on white paper the particular pattern selected, and then colour it, so as to form some idea

whether its effect, when worked out, is likely to prove satisfactory to the decorator's taste.

And now, having numbered the texts and the different border patterns for convenience of reference, we proceed to attempt to describe the colours. We give the reader fair warning that the description will be dry and tedious, and that he need not trouble himself with it until he applies himself in earnest to the task of actually working out the device whose outline has the good fortune to attract his preference.

Text I. (No. 15.) We will assume first that the letters of the text are to be written in red on the plain white ground of the paper; then the initial and border patterns may be coloured as follows:—

1, 2. These two initial patterns are intended to be used together at the beginning of the text; but the same patterns may also be used separately for borders.

1. Has strong *red* lines, with a vandyke pattern between. The shaded triangles of the vandyke are to be *red;* the plain triangles *white*, with a *red* spot.

2. Has two strong *red* lines, and between them a row of *green* spots on a *white* ground.

3. Is simply a broad *green* line.

4. Consists of two lines; the outer a broad line of *red*, the inner a narrower line of *green*.

5. Has two strong *green* (or *red*) lines, with a row of *black* spots between on a *white* ground. To break the monotony which a long border of this kind would perhaps have, a stop may be introduced at intervals, composed of a *white* quatrefoil on a *red* ground.

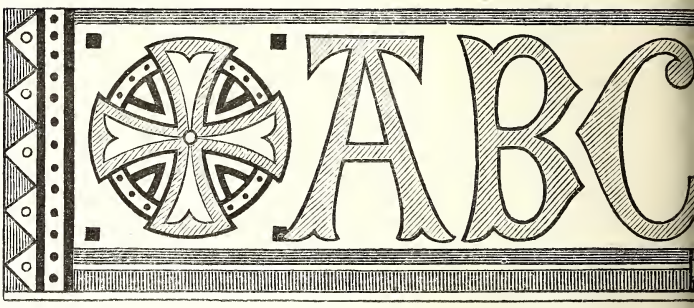
6. Consists of two strong *green* (or *red*) lines and between them a white spot on a gold ground.

The initial cross in this text is coloured thus: the central cross is *white* with *red* border, in the angles is first (next to the cross) *white* then *red*, then *white;* the circular rim has black spots on a white ground, the outer line being of red.

If the letters and ground of the text be of other colours than those we have supposed, then the colours of the initial and border patterns and devices, and the stops between the words, must be modified to make them harmonize, and this remark will apply to the texts which follow. It would occupy too much space to described the modifications at length. We have, however, taken different colours for the letters and grounds in other texts, in order to indicate to the decorator the system to be observed.

Text II. (No. 16.) Let us here assume the letters to be *white* on a *red* ground. Then the borders will be as follows:— The colours of the initial pattern must follow those of the border which may be selected.

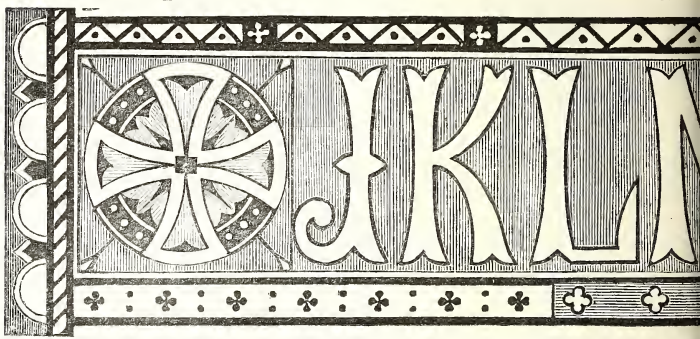
1 2



4

NO. XV.—TEXT, WITH

1 2



5 6

NO. XVI.—TEXT, WITH

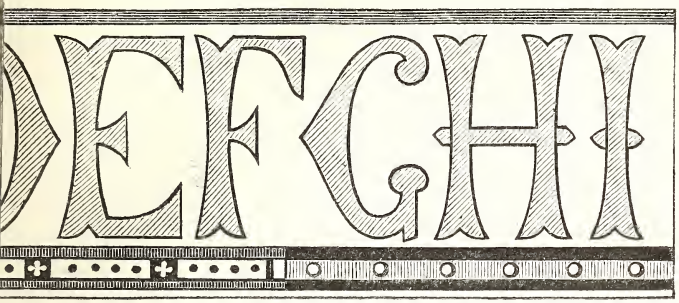
1



4

NO. XVII.—TEXT, WITH

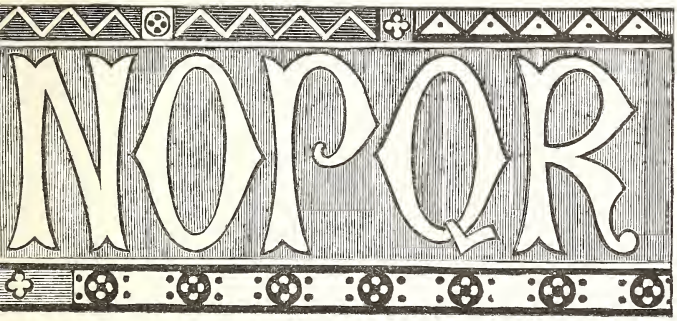
3



5 6

ORNAMENTAL BORDERS.

3 4



7

ORNAMENTAL BORDERS.

2 3



5 6

ORNAMENTAL BORDERS.

1. Has two strong lines of *green,* with a vandyke pattern between, composed of a *red* line on the *white* ground: the inner triangles of the vandyke have a *blue* spot. To prevent monotony a stop may be introduced at intervals consisting of a *white* quatrefoil, or five-leaved flower on a *green* ground.

2. Has a *green* ground, with a *white* chevron or zig-zag upon it, the inner triangles marked with a spot of black.

3. Has a *white* chevron on a *red* (or *green*) ground; the stop consists of a black circumference and spots on *green* (or *red*) ground.

4. Has the inner line *red* and the outer line *blue;* the inner triangles are white with a green spot, and the outer triangles blue with a white spot.

5. Has two strong lines of *green,* the flowers and spots *red* on *white* ground.

6. Has two strong lines of *black,* the quatrefoils *white* on a *green* ground.

7. Two strong lines of *red,* the *black* circle is charged with a *green* quatrefoil, the centre of the quatrefoil and the spots outside the circle are *black.*

Where a text is at a great distance, or in a disadvantageous light, it will come out more distinctly if the ground is *blue.* Where the text is very near to any other decoration (as a dossal) or piece of furniture (as a curtain) which has much red in it, it will be better to make the ground of the text *blue.* We will go through some of the above borders again on this supposition.

Text II. (No. 16). Letters *white* on a *blue* ground. Then the borders may be thus :—

1. The marginal lines and the zig-zag line *blue,* with *red* spots on the *white* triangles.

2. Make the inner line *red* and the outer *blue,* the chevron *white;* make the inner triangles *red* with a *white* spot, and the outer triangles *blue* with a *white* spot.

3. The inner line *red,* the outer *blue;* the inner triangles *white* with *red* spot, the outer triangles *blue* with *white* spot.

The initial cross in this text is of the same outline as in the Text II., for the sake of making one pattern serve for both; but a richer and more elaborate ornament is produced out of the same outline by the method of treatment which we proceed to describe. The inner cross of gold, with a *blue* square in the centre, and *red* terminations. The margin round that cross is to be left white; the angles coloured thus, beginning at the outside—the circumference line *black,* the next *white, green* with *white* spot, *white, red* vandyke, *gold* leaf with a *red* rib. The colours should be bounded by a tolerably strong black line.

Text III. (No. 17). Let us, for the sake of obtaining greater variety and richness of treatment, assume that the letters of this

text are gold on a *red* ground. The same treatment of the borders, with the omission of the gold, will serve for *white* letters on *red* ground. Then the borders will be :—

1. Next to the red ground of the text will come *white* with a *red* spot. The lines which compose the lozenges are *green*, with a blue spot at the intersections (the green lines must not approach too near the blue spots) ; the triangles are to be *red*, the circular ornament within the white lozenge is *gold* vandyke with a *red* marginal line.

2. Next to the red ground, *white* with a *red* vandyke at its upper margin ; the outer fillet is *white*, with *red* arches with a *white* spot, over a *green* flower with *black* centre and stamens.

3. The *red* ground is vandyked at its edges, the fillet above is *white*, then a strong green line ; next comes a row of ornaments on a *white* ground ; the ornaments are composed of a *gold* quatrefoil, a *green* spot in the centre, and the filling in between the quatrefoil and circle red. The five spots which alternate with this quatrefoil ornament are *green*, and the outer line *blue*.

After the suggestions already given, the decorator will have no trouble in planning for himself the arrangement of the borders 4, 5, 6, which are of very similar character. In the initial cross the colours may be thus arranged : the centre *red*, with white patterns in its limbs, upon a gold cross flory ; then take one of the angles between the limbs of the cross, and, beginning from the centre, the colours will be *white* spots on *green, gold, red,* with *white* triangles.

X.

Pulpit and Desk.

THE Pulpit may best be decorated by a wreath of evergreen, enriched with flowers or berries, laid in the hollow moulding which will usually be found round its upper margin. Small devices may be suspended on its sides. These devices may be of the same kind as those described for wall spaces, only of a smaller size ; or, since the Pulpit panels are near the eye, the devices upon them may be of a more minute design and richer material ; for example, circles, quatrefoils, triangles, cruciform devices, &c., may be formed of wood, covered

with cloth or velvet, and monograms be emblazoned on them in everlastings or holly berries. We will describe one as a sample. Take a quatrefoil of board, twelve inches or thereabouts across, cover its face with yellow velvet and its edge with red velvet; within a quarter of an inch of the edge of the flat face carry a marginal line all round of a double row of everlastings; in the field of the quatrefoil put an I H S, or a cross *patée*, cut out of red velvet and edged with everlastings; finish each outward angle of the quatrefoil with three small laurel leaves, and feather off the leaves by putting behind each of them a sprig of yew or other light feathery evergreen, and put a bunch of four or five holly berries at the base of the leaves.

The Reading Desk may be decorated in a similar manner.

XI.

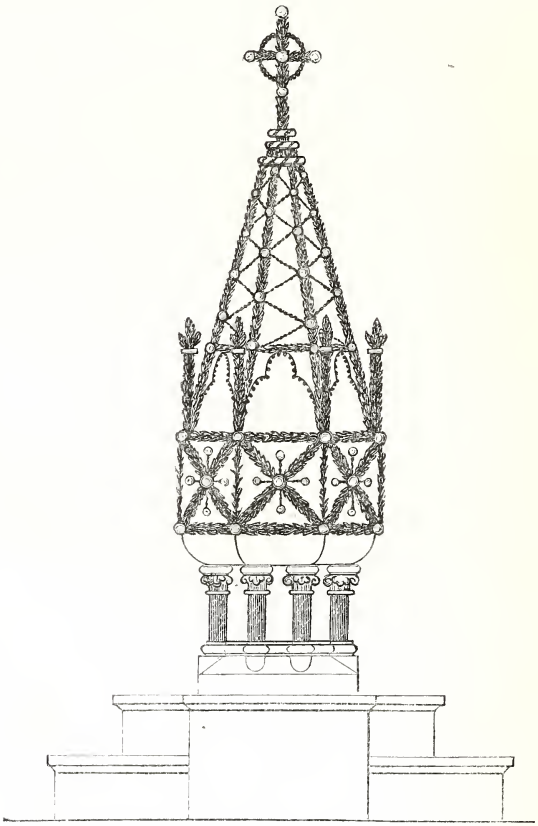
Font.

THE Canons of the Church of England require that the Communion-table and the Font shall stand in their places in Church when they are not in actual use; and the motive, doubtless, is that they may serve for symbols of the two Sacraments which Christ has ordained in His Church. When, therefore, the Church is decorated generally for any one of the great Christian festivals, it seems only right that these symbols should be also decorated, and in a proportion which shall mark the importance of the things which they symbolize. On the festival on which we commemorate the birth of our Saviour, it seems specially appropriate that we should give prominence to the symbol of that Sacrament by which we are born into Him. The mere fact that the Font is a small, and often beautiful, object, and that it is very near to the eyes of the surrounding congregation, would make it fitting that, if decorated at all, it should be done with richer material and more careful workmanship than may suffice for those parts of the decorations which are on a larger scale, and to be seen as a whole from a greater distance. Accordingly, here the lines of green must be smaller in size, and more carefully made, and of choicer evergreens. White paper and glazed calico will not suffice for the devices. In short, all the minuteness of elaboration and rarity of material against

which we warned the decorator in the general trimming of arches, piers, and wall devices, may be well bestowed here. Fonts are so various in material and design, that it is a little difficult to embrace them all in any general directions. Some are plain, massive old bowls, which have little to recommend them architecturally, except their venerable antiquity, though they are equally to be honoured for their sacred use. Others are perfect architectural gems, on which precious stones and exquisite carving have been lavished with loving prodigality. In the former kind of Font we must take the general outline, and try to give, by our decorations, a beauty which does not otherwise exist. In the latter, we must be careful not to hide the architectural beauties, but to heighten them by our floral decoration. Suppose the Font to be of the former kind—say a plain octagonal bowl, supported by a massive central shaft, with a few rude mouldings, which spread into a base at the bottom. If the Font does not stand on a step, put a wreath of evergreen round the bottom of the base close on the ground, and if the shaft will carry a spiral wreath, let it be so adorned. The upper and lower margins of the bowl may have a fringe of green, carefully made, with a preponderance of the lighter kinds of evergreen, box, yew, &c., and plenty of effective variegated holly and red berries. The hollow of the Font may be filled with moss, rising into a semicircular green mound at the top; which mound may be ornamented with primulas or other flowers stuck in at regular intervals, and a bunch of white flowers at the top—camellias, if they may be had; or variegated holly in default of flowers of any kind. If the Font is placed on a step, the step may be carpeted with moss, a thickness or two of brown paper being laid under it to prevent the step being discoloured. A more elaborate fashion would be to make a frame of laths to mark out the panels of the Font bowl, as shown in the woodcut No. 18, on the next page. These panels may be filled in with ornaments of evergreens and flowers, as indicated in the woodcut. A more sumptuous way of filling the panels would be by small symbolical and cruciform devices, of the same shapes perhaps as those already described for wall spaces, but more minutely and carefully made; which devices can be fastened in the centre of the panels by invisible wires attached to the framework of lath.

If we describe another more elaborately-decorated Font, and give an illustration of a third, we shall probably have supplied the reader with sufficient hints on this part of our subject. The Font which we describe is a plain octagonal bowl, on shafts of Purbeck marble, standing on a Bath-stone base; trails of evergreen sprigs, gradually tapering off, were carried out from between the shafts upon the white stone base; the sides were

ornamented with four devices and four bunches of real flowers alternating. The devices were of the kind which we have already described; the ground white cloth, the marginal lines of gold everlastings, and the central monogram or design of holly berries. Variegated red and green leaves were laid over the lip of the Font; the sides of the leaves overlapping one another, so that the points hung down over the side of the Font and formed a



NO. XVIII.—FONT WITH TEMPORARY COVER.

kind of vandyked margin. On the cover was laid a mound of moss, which was relieved by leaves of variegated holly, primrose flowers, and bunches of red holly berries, laid alternately in circles round the mound; the mound was finished with a plain cross made of wood, covered with a single row of laurel leaves overlapping one another, and the edge covered with white ever-

lastings. Where the Font has serpentine shafts and carved panels, and the like architectural features, the foliage must be sparingly applied; and each Font will require a special design for its decoration, and sometimes it may be desirable not to decorate the architectural features of the Font at all, for fear of injuring polished marble and delicate carving. In such case, at least the steps may be carpeted with moss, starred with flowers, and the bowl may be filled with a great bouquet of the choicest flowers obtainable.

The very pretty illustration which we give on the opposite page enables us to show the way in which the effect of the Font may be greatly heightened by a temporary canopy. Here the upper step of the Font is intended to be covered with a flat carpet of moss (laid on a board or two or three thicknesses of brown paper, to prevent the stone from being discoloured), heightened by bunches of everlastings and holly berries; or, still better, of primroses; the flowers and berries may be formed into monograms or geometrical devices. To the chamfered upper edge of the bowl is fitted a framework of lath, and this is decorated with a wreath of evergreen, which forms at once the wreath of the margin of the bowl and the base of the canopy. Upon this rim of lath is carried the canopy represented in the cut, which is formed of laths simply tied or tacked together, and their faces covered with arbor vitæ or other similar fine evergreen. The trefoil arches are formed of wire covered with everlastings, and with a bunch of everlastings at their junction with the laths to represent capitals, while the base wreath is marked at each upright lath with a larger bunch to represent a base, and bunches of holly berries alternate with the everlastings in the wreath. The interlacing lines in the upper part of the canopy are formed of chains of holly berries; the points where they are fixed to the uprights and where they cross each other being marked with everlastings. Over the apex are put three wreaths of everlastings, bound round with a spiral line of holly berries. The wreaths diminish in size, and represent the steps of the calvary, and on the top is fixed a cross of lath covered with arbor vitæ, the points and intersection marked with red berries and a single line of golden everlastings on wire, forming the circle which represents the glory round the cross. The pinnacles are formed of lath (fixed on the octagonal base by a single screw) covered with evergreen, and finished with a little trefoil of bunches of everlastings fixed on wire stalks. Instead of the cross a star might be substituted, formed of a wire outline, with a single row of everlastings or of berries on each side of the wire, and the edges fringed with light sprigs of yew or other light feathery green; or, a terminal ornament may be formed of eight or ten carefully-selected small ivy leaves, on wire stalks, with perhaps a

sprig of evergreen for a finish at top. The upright lines of the canopy might also be crocketed in a similar manner with ivy leaves; in which case perhaps it would be desirable to introduce single ivy leaves on the faces of the uprights, which may be done by merely sticking their stalks under the arbor vitæ sprigs. The under sides of the laths of which the canopy is made may be left undisguised, or they may be covered with arbor vitæ, which perhaps will rather mar the effect of the design; or they may be painted white with a spiral line of green.

This description of a temporary canopy will sufficiently suggest the way in which a permanent Font canopy may be treated.

XII.

Standards and Coronæ.

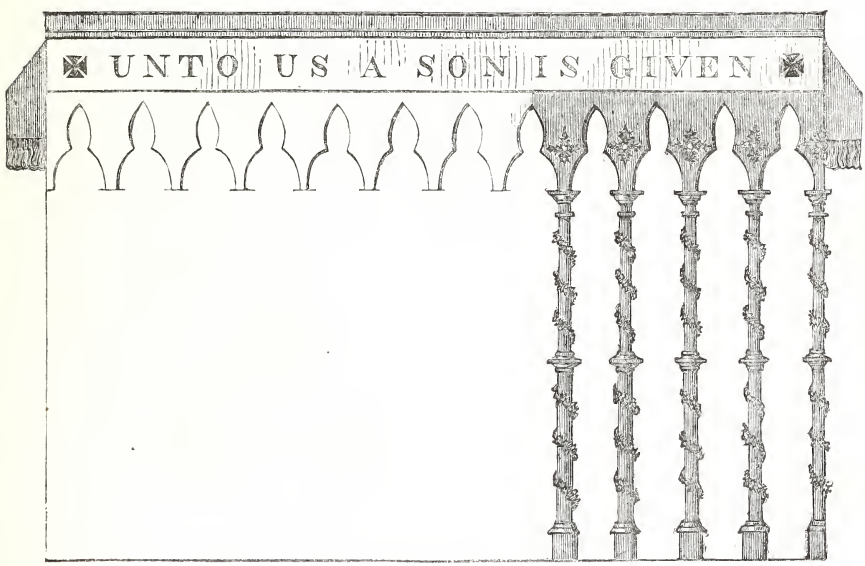
STANDARDS for lights are very easily treated. If they are for a single light, trail up the shaft a fine spiral wreath made of box, yew, and other small evergreen, and enriched with everlastings, such as are represented round the shafts of the Screen work on the next page. Round the socket of the candle or gas-burner put a little coronal made of single holly leaves sewn together so that the points stand outwards; or of the small-leaved terminal ivy twigs enriched with berries or everlastings; or of flowers and leaves. If the Standard have two branches, stop the spiral wreath of the shaft with a little coronal, and place an ornament as above described round the socket of each light. If there are three or more branches, in addition to what has already been suggested connect the branches by chains of similar manufacture to the spiral wreath, or of holly berries.

A Corona may have a wreath of holly plentifully enriched with berries round each of its circles, and sprigs of yew tied upon its chains, to turn them into chains of green, and coronals such as those already described round its sockets. The effect of the holly, with its picturesque glossy leaves and red berries brought into strong relief of light and shade by the lights is very beautiful.

XIII.

Screens.

TO decorate a Screen requires very little ingenuity and not much labour. The leading lines of the Screen dictate the design of the decoration. Cover the face of the leading lines with green, remembering that single leaves of variegated holly, or of small ivy stuck into the more sombre background of yew or arbor vitæ, will give force and piquancy; heighten the bases and capitals with berries or everlastings.



NO. XIX.—SCREEN.

Put little ornaments of trefoils, quatrefoils, or whorls of holly or other leaves into the spandrels. If there is sufficient room put a text into the hollow moulding of the cornice. Crest the upper beam with sprigs of holly or terminal shoots of spruce fir. If the Screen is of early character and has round shafts for its

mullions, then put spiral wreaths round them. The woodcut given on the preceding page of one of the side Screens of St. Matthew's Church, City-road, London, as it has been decorated for several Christmases, will give an illustration of the general design for an early Screen, and will show clearly the small wreaths to be used for Light Standards and other similar work, and the small spandrel ornaments of holly leaves and berries.

The architectural effect of many Churches would be very much improved by the restoration of a Screen to the chancel arch. The Christmas decorations afford an opportunity to try the experiment by the erection of a temporary Screen, which may easily be formed of a few splines, hoops, and pieces of wire covered with evergreens.

The effect of a side Screen to hide the organ, or of a Screen to the tower arch to keep off the draft, where the tower is used as an entrance to the Church, may be similarly tried in this temporary work. A design for such a Screen will be found on p. 69.

XIV.

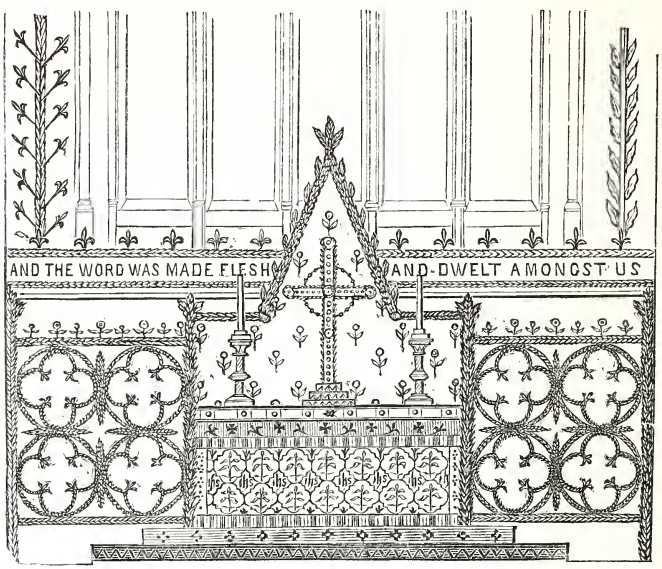
Reredos.

THE same spirit which prompts us to decorate the Lord's House at all in honour of His Birthday, impels us especially to give a festive appearance to that part of it which is, in the language of the Homily, "the Lord's Banqueting House"; where, for His faithful people, His own body and blood are spread forth for the Lord's Birthday Feast. If those bare plastered walls, and that worm-eaten table with a rain-spotted red cloth upon it, belonged to the School-room which we were called upon to make ready for a Christmas School Feast, what should we do? We should festoon the walls, and cover them with appropriate mottoes and floral devices, and hang the school flags up here and there, and strip all the gardens in the neighbourhood of their rare pale winter flowers to put in bouquets among the furniture and viands of the table. We surely need not fear that we "are going too far" when we do only as much, or not so much, to decorate the chancel of the Church for the

Christmas Communion as we should to the School-room for a children's holiday.

Our first care, then, will be to take away the chill desolate look of the bare plastered walls. This may very easily and effectively be done with a little ingenuity. We shall gain some valuable hints if we call to mind how the bare walls of Churches and halls were covered and made habitable and comely in the olden times by carved wood, or panelling, or hangings, or fresco paintings. The general richness of effect produced by hangings, or by panelling whether of stone or wood, or by fresco ornamentation, may be produced very easily with our evergreens and wall devices and texts. To enrich the bare wall it is only necessary to cover it over with some pattern. This may be done very easily. Put two upright laths in the angles of the east end of the chancel and connect them by horizontal pieces at top and bottom, making a rectangular framework. Its height must depend very much upon the proportions of the Church, the height of the sill of the east window, &c.; as a general rule, it should be from five to eight or nine or ten feet high. Tie thin strings diagonally crossing each other, so as to divide the space inclosed by the framework into lozenge pattern. At each point where the strings intersect fasten a sprig of holly or a leaf of ivy, taking care that the sprigs or leaves are all nearly of the same size. At a distance the string will be invisible, and the effect will be that the east wall will be diapered with holly sprigs. It would answer very well to put the strings between the upper and lower laths in vertical lines at equal distances, and to tie the sprigs to these vertical strings; but by the method above described the measuring of distances on the strings is saved, and to a great extent the tying of the sprigs is saved, because the majority of them may be safely lodged between the strings and the wall without any fastening; or, instead of invisible strings, red or white tape may be used, so that the lozenge pattern shall be visible; and the holly sprigs may be either lodged at the intersection of the red or white lozenge pattern as before, or tied in the centre of the lozenges by invisible strings. A pattern of this kind is indicated on the east wall of the interior view of a Church, which we have given as a frontispiece; it is finished at the top with a border of short texts between marginal lines of evergreen, and crested with holly sprigs. These kinds of patterns may be varied indefinitely by a little ingenuity; a whole series of them is suggested by ordinary tapestry or wall-painting diapers. Another series of patterns is suggested by ordinary arcading and panelling. The simplest form of this series may be made by forming a framework of laths as before, and fastening vertical lines of wreath at short distances between

the upper and lower laths. These lengths of wreath may either be made on string as for piers or they may be made on laths. A little variety of this might be made by leaving the uppermost two feet of the string or the lath uncovered with green, and then from a point in the upper horizontal lath, midway between each pair of upright laths, to let festoons droop to meet the upright lines of green, and so to form a kind of arcade with convex instead of concave arches. The points of these arches may be finished with holly sprigs, or terminal shoots of spruce fir, or triplets of ivy leaves set on wire stalks. This simple style of ornament may very well be used on the side walls of a sacrarium when a richer pattern is used on the east wall; the simple pattern will give enrichment enough to the side walls; a more elaborate pattern would be lost in the sharp perspective in which it would be seen from the nave.



NO. XX.—REREDOS.

The picture which we here give represents a more elaborate example of this style of decoration; it was designed by J. Brooks, Esq., Architect, of 5, Bloomsbury-square, for the reredos of St. Matthias's, Stoke Newington, some years ago. The straight lines of the framework are made of splines screwed together; the circles are of children's wooden hoops tied to one another and to the splines; the quatrefoils are of wire tied with the

same string which fastens the hoops. The whole framework is then covered with arbor vitæ or yew; the points of the cusps are finished with single leaves set on wire stalks: the points of contact of the hoops are finished with sprigs, and a cresting of sprigs is run along the top. The crockets and finial of the centre gable are very easily formed by putting out little bunches of green at intervals when tying on the evergreen. Take care to put these bunches on nearly at right angles to the line; when the string with which they are tied is tightened, they will assume a more vertical position. The dossal was covered with velvet and diapered with real camellia flowers, and the cross was also made of wood and covered with camellia flowers set upon their own leaves.* The text below the sill of the east window is bordered with laurel leaves regularly disposed. Two methods of ornamenting the blank wall on each side of the east window are indicated; each of these vertical lines of ornament should be finished at the height of the spring of the arch with a corresponding finial. Additional designs for Reredoses will be found at pp. 68, 70, and 76.

XV.

Entrance, &c.

IT seems to us that the Christmas decoration should not be confined to the interior of the Church. The entrance to the Church and the precincts of the Church should give premonitory indications of the festive adornments within the temple. A wreath may be put into the external hollow mouldings of the arch of the great doorway, or over the arch by way of hood-moulding, after the fashion of the door shown in the

* There are one or two ingenious devices for preserving these flowers in their freshness which some of our readers may be glad to be made acquainted with. One is to put a good coating of strong mucilage, by help of a camel-hair pencil, at the back of the lower part of the petals, to prevent them from falling off. The other is that a single drop of water dropped into the very eye of a flower once a day will keep it fresh for a considerable time. Drops of water sprinkled upon the petals discolour them.

cut at p. 26. On the exterior of a doorway the arch will be more pointed, and the text must follow the line of the arch.

The text for an exterior decoration should be one which refers to the character of the building about to be entered:

I was glad when they said unto me: We will go into the House of the Lord.

This is none other but the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven.

My House shall be called the House of Prayer.

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the House of God.

The Lord is in His Holy Temple.

Whosoever will, let him drink of the Water of Life freely.

Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

For Easter Sunday:

Alleluia! Christ is risen. Alleluia!

The text over an inner doorway may convey a final lesson to the departing congregation:

Go, and sin no more.

Bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only.

Be not forgetful hearers, but doers of the word.

For Easter Sunday:

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

The device in the pediment over the door may be any one of the wall devices already given.

XVI.

General Plan.

IN planning the decorations of a Church for Christmas, it will be wise first to sit down and count the cost, *i. e.* to calculate the quantity of material, the number of hands, and the length of time which can be given to it; and to undertake only so much as can be well executed.

We beg to recommend very strongly, in the first instance, that the work should not be put off to the last day or two. A good deal of work is involved in decorating a Church properly, especially if the Church is large; and if the work be left to the last day—we speak out of our experience—the decorators find the work unexpectedly heavy, they get fatigued and worried, the work has to be hurried at last, some things have to be left undone, and there is no time to put the final touches which are so important to the successful effect of what has been done. Happily, there is a good deal of the work which can be done before hand. Texts may be written, and frames for the devices put together at any time; even the putting together of the evergreens may be done some days before Christmas. There is no fear that the evergreens will fade if they are kept in a proper place—laid on a damp cold floor for example; and there is no reason why they should become deranged if they are properly made in the first instance, and carefully handled afterwards. Again, the general plan of the decorations should be well considered beforehand, so that no more may be undertaken than the quantity of material, the number of hands, and the time to be devoted to it, will enable the decorators comfortably to carry out; and so that the time, labour, and material may be applied to the best advantage, *i.e.*, so as to produce the most effective results. Another important preliminary caution is this, do not fall into the error, so common to tyros, of wasting time in minute elaboration which will be invisible at the distance from which the work is to be viewed. Bold outline and effective masses of colour are the points to be especially aimed at. In your calculations of time, leave ample time for putting up the devices after they are made; and time, besides, for giving those final touches to the work upon

which as much of its finish and effect depend, as the effect of a painting depends upon the final touches which the artist adds after his picture is hung on the walls of the Academy.

It will be wise also not to use up the available means in a few elaborate decorations, but to spread the decoration, as far as possible, generally over the Church. If the work is to be done with but scanty material, labour, and time, the decorator will do well to attend first to the east end of the chancel, the chancel-arch, and the capitals of the nave piers; if more can be done, let the pillars next be wreathed; then let the wall spaces be filled with devices; first, the wall spaces of the chancel; then the spandrels of the nave arcades; then, the spaces between the aisle windows; then, the west end of the nave. After this, the other adornments which we have described or indicated, may be filled in as means and taste dictate. This fact is carefully to be noted, that decorations are not always effective in proportion to the costliness of material and the amount of elaboration bestowed upon them. Moreover, it is not to be forgotten by a judicious decorator that it is the costliness of material and the elaboration of details which are especially likely to provoke opposition on the part of those who do not take kindly to the improved system of Christmas decoration. Effective *outline* is the thing to be most carefully studied, especially in the devices and decorations which are to be seen from a distance.

If we were requested to suggest a scheme of decoration for an ordinary village or town Church of the normal type—chancel, nave, and aisles, west tower, and south porch—which would be sufficiently handsome in appearance, not too burdensome in execution, and not calculated to excite an undesirable ferment in the minds of ordinary Church-goers, we should suggest something like the following:—Over the east window put a hood-moulding of evergreen. Under the sill of the window run a text in white letters on a plain green ground, surrounded by a broad border of evergreen. Divide the wall space under this text into panels by upright laths covered with evergreen; and in the central space, over the Communion Table, put a device of some kind; if objections are entertained to a cruciform device, put a simple circular wreath of holly; those who are imaginative will, perhaps, see in its prickly leaves and red berries a symbol of the crown of thorns which He whose birth they celebrate was born to wear, and to which we look forward even at His birthday feast. If there is a blank space which requires filling on the side walls of the chancel, put a device on each side, a double triangle on one side, and a triangle and trefoil on the other. Put a wreath under the soffit of the chancel arch and a handsome coronal round the capitals from

which it springs. Put coronals round the nave capitals, and, if possible, spiral wreaths round the piers—they will be found to be the most effective of all the decorations. Put, at least, a wreath round the margin of the Font and of the Pulpit. On the outside of the south door put a wreath, either over the arch by way of hood-moulding, or in a hollow moulding of the arch. If you avoid flowers altogether, you will remove one great cause of objection; and a Church thus treated will look very pleasing, and will give just offence to nobody.

Most decorators will content themselves with taking the Church as they find it, and subordinating their decoration to its principal architectural features; but an architect, or an amateur with competent knowledge, will not always be content with this; he will sometimes find it very possible to amend by his decoration a faulty leading line, or to help a defective proportion, or to hide an ugly feature, as well as to give a greater enrichment to parts of the building.

In all the preceding remarks, we have had a Gothic building in our mind's eye as the subject of our decoration. A church of Classical style will require treating on very different principles. Festoons and fillets, which would be incongruous in the one, will form the staple forms of decoration in the other. To go minutely into the subject would be to write another whole essay; but any of the illustrated books on Classical architecture or antiquities will furnish abundant suggestions to the intelligent decorator; *e. g.* Sir W. Gell's "Pompeiana," or Montfaucon's "Antiquité expliqué," contain many representations of decorations of the interiors of houses, tombs, and temples, and will supply all the hints for the general form and arrangement of festoons, garlands, fillets, and the like, which the decorator can require. Texts should be in Roman capitals, and be placed in rectangular panels. Many of the wall devices which we have given will be as appropriate in a Classical Basilica as in a Gothic Church.

We recommend that the pews and benches should be left undecorated; but if it is desired to put some holly about them out of respect to long-established custom and honest prejudices, let it not be done with great straggling boughs, but with small handsome sprigs, all of about the same size.

XVII.

Roof and Floor.

WHEN all the preceding directions shall have been carried out, there will be nothing left undecorated but the roof and the floor; and a very zealous decorator need not let even these escape. In most Churches indeed the ROOF will be too high to be reached without more risk and trouble than it is desirable to take for such a purpose. But in some small low Churches it may be very desirable to put a text along the eastern-most tie-beam, or to wreath a king-post, and hang festoons from beam to beam.

On the FLOOR, especially within the altar rails, the old custom of strewing with herbs and flowers may be retained, as it still is at some of our civic festivals. For example, at the election of sheriffs for the City of London for the year 1862, we read in the newspaper report of the ceremony, that "The dignitaries of the corporation wore their civic robes and badges, and, following a time-honoured usage, carried bouquets in their hands. The hustings were also profusely strewn over with herbs and flowers."

XVIII.

Conclusion.

WE beg to offer one concluding suggestion on the making of the Christmas decorations. Choose a large room, near the Church if possible, for the place of fabrication, and invite as many persons as possible to take a share in the work. Every family which has a daughter engaged in the work will have seen some of the devices made at home of an evening, and heard of what greater things are going forward at the Parsonage or the School-room; brothers will have helped to tie laths and hoops and to bend wire; mothers will have given a hand to the stitching and tying; and fathers will at least have looked on, over the newspaper; and so the whole family will have learned that nothing superstitious is involved, and no mysteries are concealed, in the doing the usual Christmas decorations with a little more care and taste than John Sexton and Widow Pew-opener used to do them; the whole family will have been brought to take an interest in the work, and to understand, and perhaps to enter into, the spirit of it. But, still more, it will serve a useful moral purpose to associate as many as possible in the work. One of the evils of our day is surely the isolation of class from class—the want of friendly intercourse even among good people of different classes. On the common ground of the Parsonage dining-room or the National School-room, you may bring together different ranks of your parishioners and the pleasant bustle and confusion of the work will shake them together, and make them more really intimate in a couple of days than in a century of uncomfortable "parties." The pleasure of seeing the work grow into beauty under their common exertions will promote a cheerful sympathy among the workers; and a judicious Clergyman will find opportunities of throwing out a word here and there to one and another which shall lead them also to make a more careful preparation than usual of the temple of their heart for the Christmas feast, and to enter more earnestly into the spiritual joy and thankfulness of which the evergreens and flowers are the outward expression.

APPENDIX.

ON THE

Easter Decoration of Churches.

THE foregoing Essay on the Christmas Decoration of Churches had the good fortune to meet a general want, and to meet it in a way which the Clergy generally were pleased to approve. From all parts of the country we had the satisfaction of hearing that the Essay influenced the Church decorations. Together with these kind approvals of what had been done, we received many requests that we would add, by way of Appendix, a few further decorations and helps; and we received other suggestions that we should increase the usefulness of the Essay by extending its principles to the decoration of Churches for several other occasions of general or local festival, on which there is a growing feeling that this innocent and beautiful custom might be adopted with advantage, and without offence. It was in obedience to the wishes thus expressed that we proceeded to give a few suggestions on the mode of decorating Churches for EASTER, for the SCHOOL FEAST, for the HARVEST THANKSGIVING, and for the CONFIRMATION, and on some partial decoration on the occasion of a MARRIAGE and a BAPTISM. Some general additions, especially under the heading of Wall Devices and Texts, will be found in the body of the Essay.

I.

Easter.

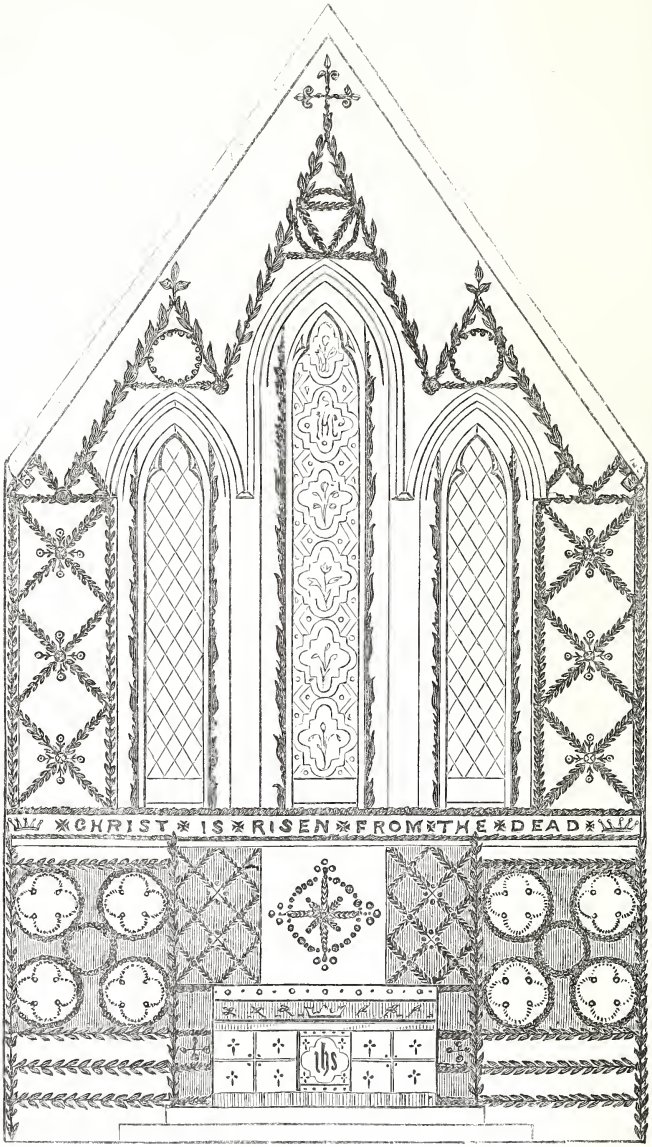
WE select Easter out of all the great Christian festivals, for a discussion of its appropriate decorations, chiefly because the old custom of decorating for Easter has survived to this day in many Churches, and has been revived in many others; so that there actually exists a sufficiently general custom to demand consideration, and provision for its observance in the best manner possible. No doubt there is precisely the same abstract reason for decorating God's House on other great days of observance. But unless such outward observance springs out of the earnest feeling of the worshippers, it is no honour to God, or delight or profit to man; and if such outward observances produce suspicion and ill-feeling among the worshippers, they are, perhaps, "more honoured in the breach than the observance."

A moment's recollection of the state of our gardens and groves at Easter time will be sufficient to show the intending decorator that we shall still have to depend upon the evergreens for the bulk of our decorative material. In the deciduous trees the rising sap is only then beginning to thicken the twigs and swell the leaf-buds; our gardens only yield the pale spring flowers. These are tokens of the yearly miracle with which, from the beginning, nature has preached to man the great Easter news of a spring of new life after the winter of death. But nature, in our cold clime, is behindhand with her tokens. Before she has hung out her green banners from the wintry trees, and covered the dark earth, in which last year's flowers were buried, with new blooms, the Easter season has arrived; and the Church has proclaimed, not in type and figure, but in plain clear accents, the truth of that Great Resurrection in which the resurrection of all things is included.

Evergreens must still therefore form the principal material for our decorations and devices; and the general plan of decoration which we have described for Christmas will be also the general plan for Easter—wreathed pillars and garlanded capitals; decorated arches, screens, reredoses, fonts, and pulpits; and wall

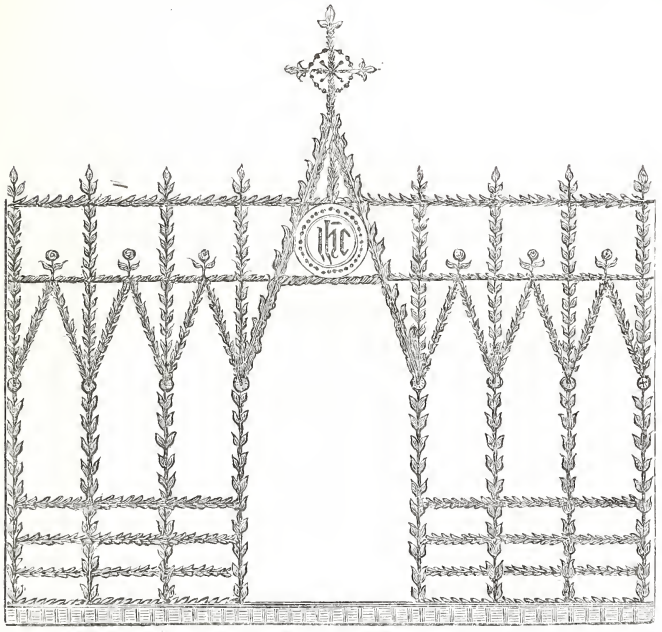
spaces filled with devices and texts. The Christmas holly need not be made so prominent, though we shall not be able to dispense with it altogether; especially as nothing else can supply the place of the *variegated* holly in giving lightness and relief to the more sober green. The general character of the Easter decoration will therefore greatly resemble the Christmas decoration; but there are two things peculiar to Easter which will tend to produce a difference in its decorations. In the first place Easter is the day of all the year on which it is appointed that *every* adult Christian shall come up to commemorate the sacrifice and death and resurrection of Christ in the Lord's Supper; it is the one day in the year in which the whole Church is specially required to hold communion with one another, and with the common Head: the decorator will therefore be led to bestow special care and elaboration upon that part of the Church to which the congregation come up to receive the Holy Communion. He will perhaps most easily secure this effect of special elaboration in the chancel by diminishing the decorations of the nave; this he may do by merely, in the nave, garlanding the capitals of the piers, and running a text under the wall-plate of the roof or the string course of the clerestory, leaving piers and arches and walls, and font and pulpit and desk, untouched. The second thing peculiar to Easter, which will tend to influence its decorations, is, that it is the festival of the Resurrection, and that a flower is one of the most beautiful and appropriate symbols of life—a beautiful, pure, and glorious life—springing up out of death and the grave of the wintry earth. The decorator will, therefore, desire to introduce—not the red holly berries which give colour and cheerfulness to the winter greenery, nor the dry and sapless everlastings with which he was content at Christmas. when it is not the season of flowers; but when the fresh, beautiful, delicate spring flowers are coming to life again under every hedgerow and in every garden-bed, he will exercise a very strong prudential restraint upon his good taste and poetical feeling, if he abstain from placing these symbols of resurrection here and there and everywhere among the decorations of Christ's Banquetting House for His Resurrection Feast.

We have already given, in the frontispiece to the Essay, a design for the general planning of the decorations of the east end of a Church with one large east window. We now give a design for an east end which has three lancet windows. The design is of very elaborate character, and is intended to offer as many suggestions as possible; the decorator will take the whole of it, or parts of it, or will modify it, according to his taste and the means at his disposal. For example, he may take only the



NO. XXI.—EAST END WITH REREDOS, ETC.

text under the sill of the windows, and the triple canopy over them, with or without the circles in the points of the gables; or he may omit the canopy, and take the lines of decoration in the splays of the windows, continuing them round the arches if he please. He may omit the wall diapering beside the windows, and it will furnish him with a pattern for use elsewhere. He may omit the reredos and dossal, or he may substitute for them the design which we have before given in the Essay, or any other of the many designs which a little ingenuity will enable him to devise. After the detailed directions which we have already given for fabricating all these kinds of decorations, we need do

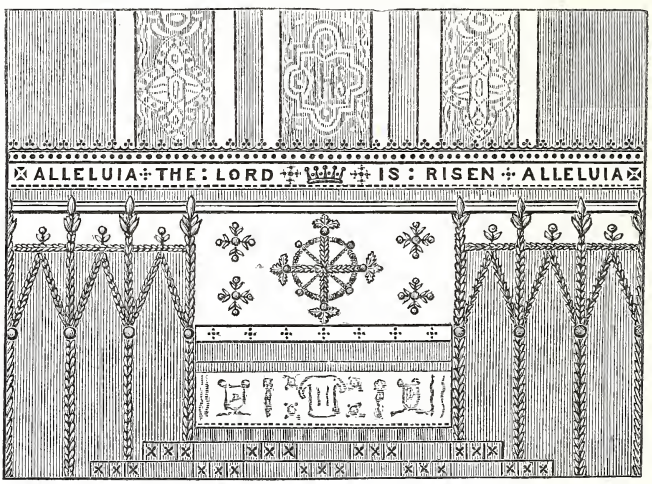


NO. XXII.—TEMPORARY SCREEN.

no more than give a few brief hints in explanation of the drawing. The cruciform device over the altar is of flowers, relieved by leaves, on a white ground; the flowers of the cross and its terminations may be white and red camellias or roses; the circle may be a continuous line of yellow flowers, jonquils for instance, relieved by an edging of green leaves. The compartments on each side of this are intended to be a red ground, with a lattice of green leaves, and flowers at the intersections. The remainder of the reredos is a framework of laths and circles

covered with green, as before described. The text may be of green or red letters on a white ground.

In the Essay we gave a brief description of the kind of temporary chancel screen which might be erected on such an occasion as this. We give on the preceding page a representation of such a screen, of very simple construction, but of very excellent effect. The framework consists simply of four vertical laths on each side of the doorway, and two at the top right across the chancel arch, four horizontal ones on each side to form the lower panels of the screen, and fourteen others to form the simple gabled tracery. This framework is covered with green, crocketed and finialed in the way before described, up all the vertical lines, but not along the horizontal lines. If flowers are used at all, the capitals and finials and cresting, and the terminations of the cross, may be



NO. XXIII.—REREDOS.

thus decorated. The circle in the gable of the doorway may be formed of painted board or card, with the monogram done in gold; or the monogram may be cut out of card and fastened by invisible wire within a circle of green.

Any of the religious symbols before described for Christmas will be appropriate in wall designs for Easter. The specially appropriate device for Easter is doubtless the cross, not plain, not the cross of pain and shame, the accursed tree upon which Jesus was crucified, but the cross as the instrument of redemption, as the weapon whereby the Son of Man triumphed over death and the grave, as the honoured symbol of all that is true and dear to us; the cross bursting into leaf and blossom, like

Aaron's typical rod which budded; surrounded by a garland, as if the crown of thorns had turned into a festive garland, or as if, in the same spirit in which the old painters put a nimbus round the heads of sacred persons and the symbols of sacred things, we on Easter morn had surrounded the sacred symbol with a nimbus of flowers which are symbols of resurrection and of joy. Or, lastly, the cross may be crowned, in token of His triumph over it on Easter, who hung dead upon it on Good Friday. The crown should be fastened by invisible wires at a little distance over the cross.

Appropriate Easter texts will be gathered in abundance from the services for the day. These are some of the most obvious:—

The Lord is risen. Alleluia! He is risen indeed.

Christ is risen from the dead, the first fruits of them that sleep.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.

From henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.

II.

The School Feast

IS not an appointed Church festival, but it is a local occasion of religious and social importance. It is fast taking the character which used to belong to the old Village Feast; when it is held, as it often is, on the Saint's day to whom the parish Church is dedicated, it becomes the legitimate representative of the old local festival. In many parishes it has all the good features of the old day of merry-making; the bells ring from early morning, and the parish makes a day's holiday; there is a service in Church, to which the children march in procession with a band playing and flags flying; Sunday-school teachers keep order along the line, and the clergyman in his gown and bands, supported by the school committee,

his chief parishioners, brings up the rear. After service the whole congregation adjourns to the booth in the vicarage field, where the children are feasted with beef and pudding, or with tea and plum-cake; and the parishioners, high and low, all meet together, and find themselves drawn into unaccustomed cordiality over the vicar's cup of tea or glass of wine. When the children have finished their feast, they get to the old-fashioned rural sports and games; and their elders join for the sake of setting the children a-going, and sometimes enjoy the sport as much as if they were children themselves. And when the children are getting tired, the young folks of a larger growth will get the band to play them a country dance or—*horresco referens*—a polka, and will foot it with as hearty enjoyment, and more of grace and good manners, and we doubt not with quite as much innocence, as their predecessors 500 years ago danced round the village maypole. We believe that an annual holiday of this kind is productive of great good in a parish, and that it would be well that the school feast should everywhere be sedulously cultivated and expanded into such a general festival. And when the school-room, or the booth, or the barn, in which the children have their feast, is decorated for the occasion with boughs and flowers and flags, we think it would be very desirable that the decorations should be extended into the church, or we shall run the risk of teaching the children by our practice that the service in Church is the least important part of the day's proceedings, not worth taking pains about, or bestowing decoration upon. We do not ask for much. On this occasion the chancel may be comparatively neglected (unless the children's seats are there, and then it is the nave which may suffer comparative neglect); put garlands round the pillars; and decorate the font conspicuously, to remind them that it is because they are baptised children, the lambs of the Church's flock, that all this fuss and feasting is made over them. As the school flags are carried in in procession, let them be placed against the pillars, slipped into loops of wreath made on a foundation of strong twine, so that they may stand out properly and show themselves. Two great flags, looped up to their poles with a riband, or a loop of green, may be placed at the sides of the chancel arch; and all the poles should be tipped with a bunch of green or a bouquet of flowers. A text or two may be put up in conspicuous situations:

Feed my Lambs.

Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Woe unto him that offendeth one of these little ones.

Members of Christ, children of God, inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Over against the Font:

Suffer the little children to come unto Me.

Over the children:

Keep innocency, and hold fast the thing which is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last.

Or,

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,

in full sight of the children.

III.

Harvest Thanksgiving.

AVERY general feeling has grown up of late years that we ought to have a general public thanksgiving after harvest. This feeling has found fitting expression in the Report of a Committee of Convocation, which has suggested this as one of the occasions for which it is desirable that a special service should be provided. Another Committee of Convocation, appointed for that purpose, has already prepared a draft service for the occasion; and it is therefore probable that before very long an annual Harvest Thanksgiving will be appointed by proper authority, and a special service will be put forth for it. Already in some parishes a beginning has been made. The cultivators of the land have been induced, instead of giving their several Harvest Homes after the old fashion, which was so often accompanied by excess, to join together in giving a general Harvest Feast, not only to the labouring men, but to their wives also. Usually, the first part of these better Harvest Homes has been for all to go to God's House to join in thankful worship of the Giver of the Harvest: and in some cases the Church has been appropriately decorated for the occasion. The Squire's great barn, in which the men dine in the afternoon, is always decked with boughs and flags, and sometimes a great sheaf of the finest

white wheat is carefully made and tied up with ribands, and placed in the middle of the table; and if those who take so much pains to grace the occasion really feel that for all the parish to go to Church in the morning, to thank God with grateful hearts for the common blessing, is as important a part of the day's proceedings as for the labourers to have their harvest dinner in the afternoon, and for their wives to join them at tea in the evening, they will hardly be satisfied to deck the barn with boughs and flowers and corn, and to leave the Church uncared for.

The Jewish Harvest customs were very beautiful and significant, and the reading of them, in the 26th chapter of Deuteronomy, and the 23rd of Leviticus might fittingly be appointed as the First Lessons in our Harvest Thanksgiving service.

The ceremonial mentioned in the 23rd of Leviticus, vv. 10 to 15, was performed before any one might begin his harvest, and was a hallowing of the harvest performed on behalf of the whole nation. It took place in the evening when the first day of the Passover was ended and the second begun. Three men were deputed to go and reap a sheaf of barley (as the first ripe of all the grains) in the fields about Jerusalem, in the presence of a great number of the people. The three deputies, having first obtained formal leave of the owners, reaped each a handful with three different sickles out of three different fields, and each man conveyed his portion separately to the Porch of the Temple. There the three handfuls were brought together into one sheaf, threshed, winnowed, parched, and bruised in a mortar; that is to say, a ceremonial imitative of the process by which corn is made into food for men was solemnly enacted. Then, part of the corn so prepared was sprinkled with oil, a handful of incense thrown upon it, and it was cast into the fire upon the altar; *i. e.*, the first-fruits of the whole harvest were thus offered up to God; after which every one was at liberty to reap and gather in his harvest. Then, after the gathering in of the whole harvest each man was required to go and offer of the first fruits of his own field, vineyard, and orchard in token of gratitude to God the Giver. Every Jew was to go up to Jerusalem, bearing a basket filled with the produce of his land. We are told that the ordinary baskets were of osier, but the rich bare their first-fruits in baskets of silver and gold. At the bottom of the basket was placed the barley, above that the wheat, then the olives, above them the dates, next pomegranates, and at the top figs, the grape bunches being hung outside; and each kind of fruit was separated from the rest by green leaves. The men used to meet in the chief city of their tribe, and thence march in large bodies up to Jerusalem, bearing their baskets

on their shoulders. Arrived at the Temple, each man gave his basket to the priest, who set it down before the altar; and the man stood before God, and said: "A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation great, mighty, and populous. And the Egyptians evil-entreated us . . . . and when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers He heard our voice . . . and brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand and a stretched-out arm . . . and He hath brought us into this place, and hath given us this land, a land that floweth with milk and honey; and now, behold, I have brought the first-fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me." And he was "to worship before the Lord his God, and rejoice in every good thing which the Lord his God had given unto him" (Deut. xxvi. 1-12).

This is the spirit in which we must offer up our Harvest Thanksgiving; and our decorations of the Church for the service must be inspired by, and must inspire, such a spirit. The fruits of the earth should form the materials of our decoration, and we must use them so as to express our thankfulness to God who gives them, and, if it may be, so as to shadow forth some of the deep spiritual truths which lie hidden beneath them.

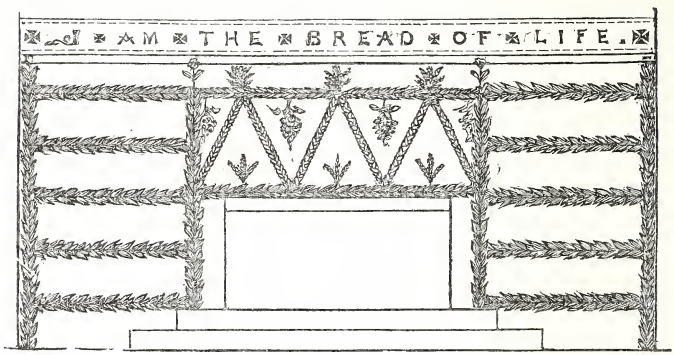
The decorator of artistic feeling will delight in the prospect thus opened up to him. His eye will glisten as he but thinks of the contrast between the green foliage and the golden straw; of the varied character of the ears of wheat, and bearded barley, and the graceful pendent oats, which he may weave into his designs; of the vine leaves and the grape clusters which he may use at such a time, and the bunches of autumn fruits. To these materials, which will suggest themselves, we will only add oak leaves, as a symbol of all the forest trees, and as a leaf which peculiarly harmonises with the forms of architecture; and flowering grasses, many of which are very beautiful, as symbols of the "grass for the cattle." The wreaths for the piers may be made of a band of plaited straw about half an inch wide, ears of corn being introduced at regular intervals. Either ears of the different kinds of corn and flowering grass may be introduced alternately in the same wreath, or wheat exclusively in one wreath, barley (or bearded wheat) in



NO. XXIV.

the next, oats in the next, and grass in the fourth. The effect of the wreath will be very much heightened by the introduction of green foliage, vine leaves, and oak twigs, and it may be made still more gay by the introduction of flowers; and perhaps the whole wreath would be thrown up into more effective relief from the pier if the straw-plait were bordered on each side by laurel or oak leaves, which may be stitched on behind after the wreath is made.

The capitals may be adorned with a garland of hop, vine, or oak; or a band of plaited straw may be fastened round above the neck moulding, and into it may be stuck single leaves of oak or vine, alternately with triplets of ears of corn; or ears of corn may be disposed in a fretwork round the lower part of the bell, while the upper part is covered with leaves of vine; or the lower part of the bell with alternate oak leaves and ears of corn, the upper part with aigrettes of oats.



NO. XXV.—HARVEST REREDOS.

The wall devices may be of the same forms as those which have been already described for Christmas; only instead of being made of two shades of green, they may be made of green leaves and golden straw. The ornaments in the centre of the circles, triangles, double triangles, &c., may be made of ears of corn, *e. g.* a whorl formed of ears of bearded wheat, with a flower for the centre; or a miniature sheaf of corn. One or two great sheaves, of the finest wheat produced in the parish, might be neatly made and tied with a garland instead of a strawband, and placed within the communion rails; and afterwards given, together with all the other corn used in the decorations, to some one or more deserving poor people.

Among devices there are two of peculiar significance, which may with great propriety be placed on the east wall of the chancel, one a miniature wheatsheaf surrounded by a wreath of green leaves,

and flowers; and the other, a large bunch of grapes surrounded by a wreath of vine leaves. Or, the two may be combined in one device to be placed over the Communion table, by putting a miniature wheatsheaf within a garland of vine. The symbolism of these devices is sufficiently obvious: corn and wine are emblems as old as the world of all the good things which God has given to sustain and refresh our bodies; in the Lord's Supper they have this significance; we offer them as tokens that we receive all good things from God; and he blesses and returns them to be sacraments of the body and blood of Christ which sustain and refresh our souls. No doubt, in the Thanksgiving Service which is about to be put forth, there will be a special collect, epistle, and gospel for the Communion service, and this spiritual significance of the Harvest will be brought out in a way which will elucidate to all the people the meaning of our devices composed of wheat and vine. We give on p. 76 a design for a harvest reredos, whose several parts will indicate to the ingenious decorator the way in which many other parts of the harvest decorations may be treated. On each side of the Communion table are two upright laths, and two others in the angles of the wall, fitted under the string-course, or screwed to the horizontal laths which carry the texts across under the sill of the east window. Five horizontal laths, or more according to the height of the sill, are fastened to the vertical ones. These are all covered with green, or with wheat-ears bordered with green. The central compartment over the altar has two horizontal laths, the upper one covered with green, the bottom one with oak leaves. The triangular canopies may be made of plaited straw finialed with flowers; between the canopies may be hung clusters of grape or bunches of other fruits; within the canopies, standing upon the lower lath, may be bunches or miniature sheaves of wheat.

Within the last few years the observance of the Harvest Thanksgiving, and the decoration of the Church for the occasion, have become so general that it bids fair to be, next to Christmas, the most popular and best observed of our ecclesiastical festivals. We give the following notes of special features in the decorations or ceremonial, culled from newspaper reports and private communications:—

At St. George, Winkleigh, Devon, the Church was reopened, after restoration, for the Harvest Festival, and the Church was handsomely decorated. "For this purpose, every farmer of the parish was asked to give a sheaf of corn for the decoration of the Church, and what was not used for the purpose will be distributed to the poor. The farmers were unanimous in complying with the request, and many offered more than was asked for. The day was kept as a general holiday, and several triumphal arches

adorned the village. The Church was decorated with corn and flowers, the thankofferings of the parishioners. Long lines of ears of wheat swept round the arches of the aisles, with hop flowers twining gracefully up the granite pillars; from the font through the aisles to the chancel gleamed the golden grain, interspersed with flowers and mottoes."

At All Saints, Lullingstone, Derbyshire, the parishioners went to Church in procession, everyone carrying a beautiful bouquet of geranium and wheat ears. "On arriving at the churchyard gate the band ceased playing; the harvest hymn, No. 223 in 'Hymns Ancient and Modern,' was commenced, and so singing, clergy, choir, and people entered the Church in order. Everything spoke of harvest. On either side the porch rested a good sheaf of wheat. Wheat sheaves, with bunches of grapes, were laid upon the white-vested altar. Every standard in nave and aisles bore its selected ears of corn. The flower wreaths, which crept round the stalls and lectern, were interlaced with the golden wheat ear. The font was surmounted with a canopy of bowers terminating in a tall cross."

At East Brent, a loaf of the new year's corn was presented, and used for the Holy Communion.

At St. John's, Leicester, the wreaths round the capitals and along the string courses were of plaited wheat, oats, barley, and ivy, with red berries and red and blue flowers interspersed. In the decoration of the pulpit and font evergreens, corn, scarlet and blue flowers, ferns, and twigs of berberry were used, strung together with the branches of red berberries hanging down, and the effect is spoken of as being very successful. On the Communion Table were laid a group of two sheaves of wheat, with bunches of purple and white grapes, on a back ground of vine leaves, between the sheaves; and on the wall behind, encircling an I H S of wheat ears, was a star of vine leaves, grapes, and flowers, having the text "I am the Bread of Life," worked within it in grains of wheat.

At South Newton, Wilts, the parishioners went to Church in procession; first banners and a band of music, then three men in their smock-frocks, bearing sheaves of wheat, oats, and barley; then the "Salisbury Plain Shepherds," bearing their crooks, tied round with locks of wort and ribands; then the farmers, and then the labourers, two and two.

At Paulton, Somerset, "Over the Churchyard gate was a pretty and tasteful design of flowers, interspersed with corn and evergreens, flanked by two small sheaves of wheat; on either side of the Church porch was a sheaf of corn, one of wheat the other of barley. Several flags floated in the breeze from the ancient tower, and during the day the bells rung merry peals."

Among the multitude of texts which bear upon the subject, our difficulty is to select those which are most appropriate. The following are some of them.—For the nave:

Honour the Lord with thy first-fruits, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty.

While the earth remaineth seed-time and harvest shall not cease.

He giveth food to all flesh; for his mercy endureth for ever.

He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the flour of wheat.

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

For a long text under the wall-plate of the aisles, or the stringcourse of the clerestory:

Thou visitest the Earth and blessest it.

He bringeth forth grass for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men; and food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and bread to strengthen man's heart.

Thou hast given and preserved to our use the kindly fruits of the earth, so as in due time we might enjoy them.

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

If there is to be—as surely there always should be—a collection for the poor or other good purpose:

Freely ye have received, freely give.

Over the chancel-arch may be put:

The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

Over the Communion table:

I am the bread of life.

On the chancel walls:

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

IV.

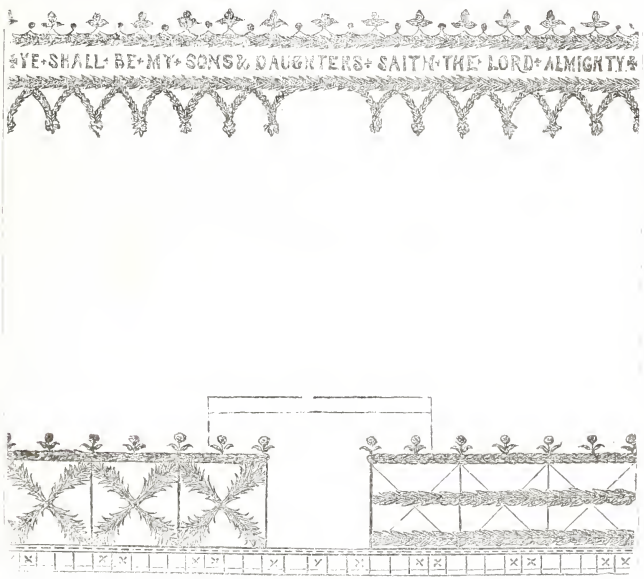
Confirmation.

PERHAPS the most deeply and generally interesting of the rites of the Church is a Confirmation. Once in three years the young men and maidens in the earliest bloom of man and womanhood are brought from their parishes to the chief Church of the district to meet their chief pastor, the representative to them of Christ's Apostles, yea, in some sense the representative of Christ himself. They have been carefully instructed and trained (in properly-conducted parishes) for weeks beforehand, and brought to look forward to and understand the life upon which they are just entering. And they come to profess to the Bishop in the presence of the Church that they deliberately choose the service of God; they come to enter publicly upon the duties and responsibilities and privileges of the Christian life; they come to have the hands of the Bishop laid upon their heads, for the only time in life, in fatherly blessing, and in solemn invocation of the graces of Confirmation. It is a sight full of interest to see them come in little flocks, each under the guidance of its careful and anxious pastor, and take their places, the girls in their neat white caps on the north side, the boys on the south side of the nave; while parents and sponsors and friends throng the aisles, some to be spectators of the solemn and imposing ceremony, some to offer up the prayers of full hearts on their children's behalf. It seems to us that, if there is any occasion on which it is fitting to adorn the Church with more than usual beauty, it is on such an occasion as this.

To what extent the decoration of the Church for a Confirmation should be carried we leave to the taste and feeling of the decorator; the descriptions which we have already given for Christmas and Easter will supply all that he needs. For ourselves, we think that the decorations should not be on too poor a scale. We should like to put an arch over the exterior of the great doorway, with a garland of laurel tied with white riband, over or suspended from, its apex. And we would garland the capitals of the nave, and wreath the pillars of the chancel besides; and in the chancel decorations, if no scruples of

prudence forbade, we would introduce the white flowers of the season; over the altar, or over the chancel arch, or over the east window, we would put a cross with a crown over it, to symbolise that the crown of immortality is our reward if we bear our cross Christianly here—or, instead of cross and crown, a garland of leaves and flowers to symbolise the glorious prize of the race for which those young men and maidens are entering the lists of life.

The chief interest of the scene is concentrated at the altar steps at which the catechumens kneel, and here, if it may be devised, should be the climax of the decorations. This may be done partly by not decorating the east end of the chancel, so that the eye will not be attracted past the altar rail, and partly by some decoration at the altar rail. For example, the space between the rail and the step may be filled in with cancellation in patterns of green, such as those which we have given for rere-doses and wall diapers; the rail itself may be measured off into the several spaces allotted to the catechumens, and divided by



NO. XXVI.—DECORATION OF COMMUNION RAIL FOR CONFIRMATION.

bouquets of green and flowers. Again, a text, framed in green leaves, may be carried on a framework of laths across the chancel, at some ten or twelve feet high immediately above the altar rail, so that the eye will be arrested at that line instead of passing beyond to the east end. The text may be crested above with sprigs of green heightened with flowers; and, to make it

still more elaborate and conspicuous, it may be cusped on the under side with bent wire covered with green, with pendants hanging from the points of the cusps; make the arches formed by these cusps just as wide as the spaces marked off on the altar rail beneath, and they will have the effect of a canopy overhanging the heads of the kneeling catechumens. We give on the preceding page a woodcut of this arrangement; the two sides of the altar-rail give alternative patterns of cancellation. Instead of cusps of bent wire, nearly the same effect may be produced by a straight-sided zig-zag of lath.

Among the appropriate texts we select the following:

My son, give me thine heart.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

My grace is sufficient for thee.

Over the altar rail:

I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

(or if the whole text be too long, the latter clause of it only.)

Over the west:

The way of transgressors is hard.

And these from the Apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus:

The fear of the Lord is honour, and glory, and gladness, and a crown of rejoicing.

The fear of the Lord maketh a merry heart, and giveth joy, and gladness, and a long life.

V.

Marriage.

THERE are some other occasions of family religious festival in which it might be desirable to permit those who are interested to put some appropriate partial adornment in the Church. When a rich man dies, his family are allowed to put his pew in black, and sometimes the altar and pulpit and reading-desk besides. In some country places, when a maiden dies, a garland of white flowers (sometimes artificial flowers) is laid on her coffin as she is borne to the grave, and is afterwards hung up over her accustomed place in Church.

Why should people be allowed to bring their symbols of family affliction into Church, and not the symbols of their family rejoicings? When the Squire's or the Rector's daughter is married, the marriage procession walks in stately order from the bride's house to Church, and the village children strew flowers along the path beneath the bride's feet. Why do they cease their strewings at the Church door, and not continue them all up the aisle to the altar rails? Is then the religion of the Gospel consonant with affliction and melancholy, but must we check our innocent mirth in its presence, and hide our human joys when we come before God, as if we had cause to be ashamed of them, or as if He did not sympathise with them? God forbid! Let us, for God's honour, fight against that lie of Satan's inventing, that religion is bitter and melancholy, and vice is charming and gay; let us make haste to take godliness out of mourning, and put sin into it. No friend in the world more warmly sympathises with all our innocent human joys than the good God and Father who created us human and gave us joy; there is nothing fitter than to bring your symbols of love and hope and joy into Church, when you come there to ask your heavenly Father's blessing upon the happiness which He has given. Scatter your flowers, then, children, under the fair bride's feet up to the very steps of the altar. And if the friends of the bridegroom and the bride desire to introduce further symbols of their joy into Church to grace the marriage ceremony, we do not see why they should not be allowed; and we will offer them one suggestion in aid of their

good design. Erect a floral canopy over the place where the pair will stand to receive the Church's blessing. It need not be a very elaborate erection. Two laths some eight or nine feet high for uprights, and two others to form a steep gable from them, an arch of two osiers, or two hazel wands out of the nearest copse, and a hoop within the point of the gable, binding the gable and the arch together, will form a framework; cover this framework with green, crocket the gable as before described, and terminate it with a finial; stick in white flowers here and there among the green, and, if you like, hang a wreath of white flowers from the apex of the arch, and fill in the circle in the gable point with a monogram of the bride and bridegroom's initials. If you wish to make a more definite canopy of honour than this mere skeleton and indication of one, erect a simple framework four or five feet west of the first, and put gables at the sides also of the square thus formed; and from the tops of the four uprights carry four laths to meet in the middle in a sort of spire; crocket these laths boldly, and carry the lines of green into a handsome finial, and hang your garland from the centre of this spirelet. If you choose to make this canopy moveable, and to let the groomsmen carry it over the pair as they return through the Churchyard, and then plant it at the bride's door for the rest of the day, who will say you nay? If you choose to put a text under the sill of the east window, or over the Communion rail, as in Confirmation, here is a suitable one:

℣lease him in body and soul, and live together in holy love unto your lives' end.

VI.

Baptism.

AGAIN, when a child is to be baptised, of parents who appreciate the value and blessedness of the rite sufficiently not to be satisfied with spending all their festive preparation on the baby's cloak and hood, and the christening dinner, it seems to us that they might very fittingly be allowed to decorate the Font for the occasion. If the Font may be properly decorated at Christmas, when it stands merely as a symbol of the Sacrament, surely it may, with much greater propriety be decorated when actually used in its administration of the Sacrament.

And should any one suggest that, by parity of reasoning, the Lord's Table may be with equal propriety adorned at the time of the administration of the other Sacrament, we will only in reply supply the suggester with an example—at the Church of St. Augustine and St. Faith, London—where it is a custom of immemorial antiquity* to decorate the Lord's Table with flowers whenever the Lord's Supper is administered. We have already given sufficient directions for the general designing of the decorations of a Font; when it is decorated for a Baptism at a time of year when flowers are to be obtained, it will be only natural to use them in the decorations, and to choose especially those whose colour will symbolise the purity from stain of original sin, of which "the washing of regeneration" is the type and sacrament. Over against the Font may be put the text,

Suffer the little children to come unto Me.

* Intermitted for a time in later years, but now resumed.

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